Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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FBIS-NES-94-223 *18 November 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

Committee Agrees on Plan for PA Import Permits

TA1711122394 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 17 Nov 94 p 2

[Report by Jose Rosenfeld]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Israeli-Palestinian Joint Economic Committee yesterday agreed on procedures that will enable the Palestinian Authority to issue import permits, including for car imports to Gaza and Jericho, the Treasury reported.

The joint committee, headed by Treasury budget director David Brodet and Palestinian Authority Ministry of Trade and Economic Development director-general Amin al-Haddad, met yesterday to discuss issues that have arisen in the process of implementing the economic accord between the two sides.

In addition to the import permits, the sides reviewed outstanding matters in the areas of agriculture, health, income taxes and Value Added Tax [VAT].

They decided to establish an agriculture subcommittee that will clarify Palestinian import policy. The subcommittee is expected to report on its work within three weeks. Moreover, in two to three weeks, there will be a general discussion on agricultural trade and vegetation protection rules.

The sides agreed that the Palestinians will be entitled to issue import licenses for medicines that are included in Israel's authorized list. In case the Palestinians want to import medicines not included in the list, the health subcommittee will review the request.

Also, Israel agreed to link the West Bank to its tax computer data service when the Palestinians assume responsibility for collecting income taxes there. Israel also offered to reestablish the link with Gaza, which was cut in June.

On Sunday, the sides will review all VAT receipts held by the Palestinians and pay refunds on those transactions that are not contested such as payments for electricity, telephone, cement, steel, gasoline, meat, cigarettes, electronics and purchases by the authority. Both sides will also present business VAT receipts to each other to verify the existence of the transactions behind VAT refund requests.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Official Reaffirms Israel Boycott Still in Effect

JN1711143694 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Our correspondent in Damascus, Thana' al-Imam, has asked Zuhayr 'Aqil, director of the Damascus-based Bureau for Boycotting Israel, if the Arab boycott of Israel is nearing its end. This, he said, is nonsense.

[Begin recording] ['Aqil] This is nonsense. The Arab boycott is still in force. The enemies of the boycott and those who have bad intentions may want the boycott to end. The boycott is in force and is continuing. The boycott has not been affected so far.

A great deal has been said about the boycott. The boycott is a unanimous Arab decision. The boycott will not be abolished or amended unless an Arab decision is issued by the body that approved it.

[Al-Imam] Mr. 'Aqil, is there nothing on the Arab League's agenda about the boycott?

['Aqil] So far, the issue of the boycott has not been listed on the agenda of the Arab League. So far, there is nothing to this effect. Of course, I cannot foresee the future. However, I would like to say that the boycott issue has not been raised recently at the Arab League Council. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Islamic Affairs

Iran, Pakistan Express Concern for Bihac Citizens

LD1811111094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The foreign ministers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have expressed concern over the recent Serb attacks on the innocent and defenseless people of Bihac, which has led to the death and injury of a group of civilians.

These latest developments in Bosnia-Herzegovina were discussed in a telephone conversation yesterday afternoon between Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and the Pakistani foreign minister.

In light of Pakistan currently holding the chair of the Islamic Conference Organization, the two sides expressed determination to continue their contacts with the other Islamic countries and the contact group of Western countries until the problem of Bosnia-Herzegovina is reviewed as soon as possible, and the necessary measures are taken for attracting the attention of Islamic countries toward the new design shaping against the Muslims of Bosnia- Herzegovina.

Turkmenistan Joins Islamic Development Bank

LD1611205794 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 16 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The board of governors of the Islamic Development Bank [IDB] today ended its 19th session in Jeddah under the chairmanship of Mari'e Muhammad, the Indonesian finance minister and

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chairman of the IDB board of governors, with the attendance of council members and the IDB president.

The council expressed gratitude for King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud for his constant support for the march of the IDB. [passage omitted]

The council also decided to accept the membership of the Republic of Turkmenistan, thus making 48 the total number of Islamic state members. [passage omitted]

Southeast Asia Islamic Trade Group Concept Viewed

BK1611100394 Dhaka DAINIK INQILAB in Bengali 3 Nov 94 p 1

[Article by Media Syndicate]

[FBIS Translated Text] In line with the concept of forming regional economic groupings among Islamic countries in different parts of the world, discussions on the formation of an economic association of Islamic nations in Southeast Asia have begun. Unofficial talks have begun to launch the Southeast Asian Economic Cooperation forum comprising Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Brunei. Official circles have also begun considering the matter. Diplomatic sources said the Islamic Conference Organization summit had endorsed the formation of regional groupings of Islamic nations in different parts of the world. This would brighten prospects for economic development in the Islamic world. In the Middle East, a process has already been started to form such an alliance. Diplomatic sources say that though official talks among Southeast Asian countries on this issue have not begun, the enthusiasm of unofficial quarters has brightened its prospects. Unofficial talks on this issue were held during the recent visit of the Bangladesh prime minister to Malaysia. An international seminar of the World Muslim Association had made recomendations in this regard. Positive discussions on the issue were also held at an international seminar on the Islamic common market in Dhaka from December 18 to 20, 1993, under the joint auspices of the Islamic Economic Research Bureau, the Islami Bank, and Al-Baraka Bank. If this forum is launched, it will play a significant role in the economic development of Southeast Asia.

The total area of the four countries to be included in the proposed Southeast Asian Economic Cooperation forum is 919,810 square miles, while their total population is 326.30 million. Their total annual exports amount to $81.9 billion. Bangladeshi exports alone amount to $1.9 billion. Malaysia's annual exports is valued at $43.5 billion, while that of Indonesia and Brunei are estimated to be at $33.9 billion and $2.6 billion respectively. Although the export volumes of these four countries are quite large, the quantum of trade among them is very low.

In 1990, Indonesia imported goods worth $21.8 billion; 23 percent of it from Japan, 12 percent from the United States, and 6 percent from Singapore. In the same year, Indonesia exported goods worth $25.6 billion. Of these, 41 percent were exported to Japan, 16 percent to the United States, and 10 percent to Singapore. The role of Malaysia, Brunei, and Bangladesh in the export-import trade of Indonesia is insignificant. In 1990, Malaysia imported goods worth $26.5 billion, with 21 percent coming from Japan, 18 percent from the United States, and 14 percent from Singapore. In this period, Malaysia exports were worth $28.9 billion. Of these, 17 percent were exported to the United States, 20 percent to Japan, and 19 percent to Singapore. The same trend was noticeable in the case of Bangladesh and Brunei. This shows that the volume of trade among the four countries is insignificant.

Tremendous prospects for boosting trade among these four countries exist. This is because there are visible differences in the products that are imported and exported by these countries. Brunei's major export, petroleum, earns 90 percent of the national revenue. Indonesia's major exports include textiles, processed food, and light industrial goods. Malaysia's major exports include rubber products, steel, electronics, cars, paper, and palm oil. On the other hand, Bangladesh's major exports include ready-made garments, jute and jute goods, tea, leather, and frozen food. Besides, Bangladesh has cheap manpower, which can be utilized by the other three countries.

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 15 Nov

NC1711205394

[FBIS Editorial Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 15 November edition of the Arabic-language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Al-Azhar Staff Donates 20 Days of Wages to Flood Victims
2. Open Budget To Rebuild Damaged Mosques
3. Seminar Discusses Propagation of Islam, Hostile Campaigns
4. Jurisprudence's Failure To Cope With Age Noted
5. Beauty Contest Condemned
6. World Islamic Council for Call and Relief Meets in Cairo

Al-Azhar Staff Donates 20 Days of Wage to Flood Victims

A 150-word unattributed report on page 1 says that al-Azhar University Council decided at a recent meeting to donate 20 days worth of wages from the teaching staff's salary, over half a million Egyptian pounds, to flood victims and their children who are studying at al-Azhar University.

Open Budget To Rebuild Damaged Mosques

A 60-word report on page 1 cites Awqaf Minister Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub as stating that "an open

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budget" has been earmarked for reconstructing and replacing the mosques damaged in the floods. The minister added that the damaged mosques will be rebuilt according to the most modern Islamic architectural principles and that some of them will be turned into "major Islamic service centers" to render services to the inhabitants.

Seminar Discusses Propagation of Islam, Hostile Campaigns

A 3,500-word report by Mahmud 'Ashab on pages 4-5 gives an account of a seminar held at the al-Azhar's Faculty of Islamic and Arab Studies for Girls in al-Mansurah. At the seminar, scholars emphasized that extremism is the result of "the absence of Islamic consciousness and the lack of proper Islamic culture." They stressed that women must join men in promoting the word of God, spoke about the role of learning and the university, and answered students' questions on a number of current issues.

Shaykh Mansur al-Rifa'i 'Ubayd, under secretary at the Awqaf Ministry, underscored the role of learning and culture in society, particularly in view of the fact that Islam advocates learning and makes it a duty.

He stressed the need for direct contact between propagators of Islam and their target population, because the mass media "do not have the desired impact." He also stressed the importance of sincerity and truthfulness for propagators of the faith.

Shaykh Mansur underscored that assaults on people are totally rejected and that the best way to avoid aggressiveness is to read the Koran and be guided by its provisions and principles. He pointed out that a man promoting the word of God "should not be rigid or violent and must not go too far. He must be forbearing, and moderate and should control his anger."

Dr. Hamid Isma'il, a professor of jurisprudence on the faculty, stressed that propagators of the faith should consider people's mentality when they perform their duty, because they address both illiterate and learned people, men and women, old and young. He advises propagators of the faith to relate to reality in their work, to rely on persuasion, and substantiate their arguments with proof in order to make a good impression on their listeners.

Commenting on the spread of strange habits that run counter to Islamic traditions, Shaykh 'Ubayd remarked that these phenomena are part of the "anti-Islam campaigns" that are seeking to change Muslims' behavior patterns. He explained that one of these campaigns sought to destroy the Muslim youth by "exporting drugs and sex."

A student asked Shaykh Mansur why the Islamic shari'ah is not being applied in Egypt. He replied that it is being applied to a large extent in our life, pointing out that the part that is not applied concerns Koran-stipulated punishments, hudud. He reassured the student that "the shari'ah has been canonized by the People's Assembly" and that there is a timetable for its application "soon."

Jurisprudence's Failure To Cope With Age Noted

In a 600-word article entitled "Islamic Jurisprudence and the Challenges of the Age" on page 9, Dr. Muhammad al-Shahhat al-Jindi, professor of shari'ah at the Faculty of Law at the University of Tanta, notes a "serious gap between our store of religious jurisprudence and our need to employ it."

Explaining that jurisprudence in early Islamic times developed in response to the environment in which it evolved, he senses a "pressing need to emerge from the state of backwardness, slackness, discord, and anarchy into a new stage that revives the nation's spirit of Islam, its universal character, its contribution to the nation's reconstruction, and its effective role in building human civilization and leading its march."

He points out, however, that this is a hard task because of the "grave obstacles made by, as well as for, Muslims, which surrenders them to systematic anarchy, throwing them into the arms of subordination, and creating a vicious circle."

Al-Jindi adds that these obstacles made Muslims neglect the intellectual methods of individual judgment that gave rise to the gift of jurisprudence and encouraged them to overlook the features of development that characterize the age.

"This systematic anarchy and the tendency to pursue Westernized approaches was a calamity for Muslims." He adds that it is "rendering Muslims strangers to Islam and to the age in which they live." Finally, he wonders when and how the Muslim nation will be put back on the right course.

Beauty Contest Condemned

A 500-word article by Majdi Salim in the "God Is Gracious" column on page 10 condemns a contest to select "the ideal girl" that will represent Egypt at the South African beauty contest next year.

The writer pitied the organizers of the contest as they "tried to throw the veil of modesty on their faces, while their bodies were naked."

Salim notes that "beauty in our age has become false and deceptive" and that beauty experts have turned women into "a commodity they promote on the pretext of freedom and progress."

Writing on the same subject, Tariq 'Abdallah says in his 350-word report on page 17 that he was shocked to see "naked contestants, each one trying to exhibit her charm and beauty to convince the arbiters that she was the ideal girl."

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He regrets that the girls failed to answer the simplest general knowledge questions.

The writer believes the organizers should have canceled the contest to mourn the victims of Durunkah.

World Islamic Council for Call and Relief Meets in Cairo

A 1,500-word report by Jamal Salim and Tariq 'Abdallahon page 20 discusses the sixth meeting of the Constituent Assembly of the World Islamic Council for Call and Relief that was held in Cairo recently.

The report says that the assembly decided to send more delegations to the areas of conflict in the Islamic world to "reconcile rivals and end Muslim bloodshed."

The conferees agreed on the need to participate in international conferences "to confront attempts to distort Islam" instead of leaving the arena to the enemies of Islam who help make the charge of extremism and terrorism in the Islamic world stick.

The report adds that the assembly urged Arab delegations taking part in the peace march to "take their time as they proceed toward normalization with Israel until all Arab rights are regained." It called for stopping the constant Israeli assault against Muslim sanctities, primarily the partition of the Ibrahimi Sanctuary.

The Youth Committee of the Assembly called on Islamic governments to "deal wisely and patiently with youth issues" and cautioned them against haste in accusing young people of terrorism just because of their adherence to the teachings and duties of Islam, since they grant considerable freedom to secularists and those who assault Islam.

The report notes that the assembly approved a number of projects "to consolidate the Islamic presence in the occupied territories," including the establishment of a number of colleges for Islamic studies there.

The assembly's general secretariat has been commissioned to "contact the French Government and persuade it to lift the injustice being committed against the Muslim minority in France," the report said.

Palestinian Affairs

Two Killed, 20 Injured as Police, Hamas Clash

TA1811111594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Two people were killed and at least 20 were injured in a first-ever clash between the Palestinian police and thousands of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] supporters. Palestinian sources told our correspondents Yoni Ben-Menahem and Dani Zaqen that thousands of Hamas and Islamic Jihad supporters who were emerging from the Filastin Mosque in Gaza city were stopped by the police. The demonstrators attacked the policemen with stones and empty bottles. The police fired at them, killed two of them and injured some 20.

Report on 'Arafat's Alleged Note to Opposition

TA1811112394 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Nov 94 p 2

[Report by Herb Keinon]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat sent a letter to heads of the rejectionist front in neighboring countries saying if they cooperate, his agreement with Israel will lead to a Palestinian state which will be a jumping off point "to remove the enemy from all Palestinian lands."

The settlement movement's radio station Channel 7 reported that in the letter, obtained by Yehoshu'a Me'iri, a journalist and former Israel Radio correspondent in Cairo, 'Arafat said that "in order to obtain the goal of returning to Palestine, all of us sometimes have to grit our teeth. But it is forbidden that this harm the continued struggle against the Zionist enemy.

"Cooperation and understanding between the PLO and the rejectionist organizations is what will lead to the speedy retreat of Israel from the occupied territories in the first stage, until the establishment of a Palestinian state with its capital in Jerusalem. And only a state like that can continue the struggle to remove the enemy from all Palestinian lands."

No Decision Made on Peace Talks' Delegation Head

TA1711142494 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza—Responding to a question about replacement of the head of the Palestinian delegation to the Palestinian-Israeli talks on elections, Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat's media adviser, explained that no decision has been issued by the Palestinian National Authority's Council of Ministers in this regard. Palestinian Minister of Planning Nabil Sha'th announced in Cairo two days ago that he will head the delegation negotiating with the Israelis in the coming stage. It is common knowledge that Minister Sa'ib 'Urayqat leads the Palestinian side in the self-rule talks.

Minister Discusses Nonattendance at PLO Forum

MM1711153894 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 5

[Interview with Palestinian Authority Minister al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim by Husayn Hijazi in Gaza; date not given]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Hijazi] Was the quorum for the PLO Executive Committee meeting secured?

['Abd-al-Rahim] The quorum requires the participation of nine members. Mahmud Isma'il (Abu-Isma'il) refused to attend. I find it difficult to understand that some people outside [the occupied territories] do not want to return to the homeland. But what cannot be understood is that some Executive Committee members who are present here on the homeland's territory consider the PLO the authority for the Authority and yet are refusing to perform their duty as watchers of the Authority to assure themselves that matters are moving.

[Hijazi] Whom do you mean?

['Abd-al-Rahim] Sulayman al-Najjab, 'Abdallah Hurani, and even Abu-Mazin (Mahmud 'Abbas), who came here before, and Abu-Isma'il who crossed the crossing point but did not participate.

[Hijazi] So do you see some contradiction in the position of Abu-Mazin, one of the people who participated in the [Oslo] accord and hence should have supported a meeting devoted primarily to bolstering the Authority and the accord in some way?

['Abd-al-Rahim] For all my respect for him, I cannot explain his position and that of others. All the Executive Committee members requested to hold this meeting for the sake of reactivating the PLO and enabling it to exercise its powers, on the grounds that it is the authority for the Authority. But we were surprised to hear them say that the Authority is not entitled to convene an Executive Committee meeting. Who is entitled? The Authority is entitled to refer to its head the request to hold an Executive Committee meeting in order to refer to its authority to settle matters which the Authority cannot settle. Because the accord is signed in the first place between Israel and the PLO, and also because the Executive Committee is the quarter which appointed the Authority. [passage omitted]

[Hijazi] Do you not believe that the absence of the factions' representatives, Qaddumi, and some other independent members denies the Executive Committee meeting the required political and moral power? Do you believe that the meeting—even though it has been held—represents a defeat for 'Arafat?

['Abd-al-Rahim] No, it is not a defeat. The meeting has anyhow been held on the homeland's territory. The quorum has on many occasions not been secured for several reasons. But these problems can be solved through continuous dialogue. We are keen to ensure that everyone comes here to reactivate the framework. A meeting must be held inside. With regard to the brothers who came here and did not participate in yesterday's meeting, did they not come here on the basis of the Oslo accord? Would Abu-Mazin, Mahmud Isma'il, 'Abdallah Hurani, and Sulayman Najjab have come here without the Oslo agreement? Would Warren Christopher have met with Qaddumi abroad without this accord? Frankly, the problem is that the brothers are dealing with the results of the Oslo accord but do not recognize this accord. I am not attacking anyone. I am criticizing from a position of responsibility and care for the PLO. All justifications are rejected. 'Arafat could have stayed abroad and said: You go and fight. I would like to ask: Why did they agree that we return to the homeland and are now refusing to return themselves? I came here in response to a decision from the Fatah Central Committee.

How come they agreed to my entry and are now refusing to enter themselves? 'Arafat too entered in response to a decision from the Fatah Central Committee. I am against double standards. No one was against the return to the homeland. Everyone agreed to the principle. But the decision was that the return be gradual. I fear that the situation might be like the man who said: you throw me into the sea naked and tell me, don't you dare get wet?

[Hijazi] Abu-Mazin said that he was not invited, is it true that you did not invite him?

['Abd-al-Rahim] That is untrue. Telephone contacts were made with everyone. In the past the Executive Committee used to call its meetings through the press. But this time in particular, telephone contacts were made with everyone. They were made by the president and Sulayman al-Najjab, and I am a witness to these contacts.

[Hijazi] You are one of the people familiar with the file of relations with Jordan by virtue of your long experience in this connection as a former ambassador to Jordan. 'Arafat contacted the Jordanian monarch twice recently. Can it be said that matters are improving at last?

['Abd-al-Rahim] There is a positive position on both sides to the effect that no political or strategic positions should be built on the basis of some transient details. This is the common rule. President 'Arafat believes deeply in the strategic relationship with Jordan, and Egypt too. [passage omitted]

[Hijazi] So are we talking about an imminent summit meeting between 'Arafat and Husayn?

['Abd-al-Rahim] Consultations are continuing to decide on the dates suitable for both King Husayn and President 'Arafat. I believe that the meeting will take place before the end of the month, immediately after 'Arafat concludes his visit to Spain on 25 November. [passage omitted]

Fatah Activists Call For New Leadership

TA1811072094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 18 Nov 94

[Report by Yoni Ben-Menahem—recorded]

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[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Ben-Menahem] The Fatah leadership in the West Bank sat until very late last night in Jibril al-Rujub's office in Jericho. The Supreme Fatah Committee discussed the crisis in the movement, in the wake of Yasir 'Arafat's order to put off the inner elections until further notice. The committee members had no other choice but to accept 'Arafat's decision. In practice, 'Arafat defeated the intifadah leadership and forced a new leadership from Tunis on it by appointing Osman Abu-Gharbiyah and Ruhi Fattuh, members of the Fatah Revolutionary Council, as heads of the Fatah Movement in the West Bank.

Marwan al-Barghuthi, secretary general of the Fatah Supreme Committee in the West Bank:

[Al-Barghuthi] The decision was made by the Supreme Committee and by Yasir 'Arafat.

[Ben-Menahem] But 'Arafat agrees to postpone the elections.

[Al-Barghuthi] Yes, he agrees, sure.

[Ben-Menahem] Why do you postpone the elections?

[Al-Barghuthi] We want to complete the necessary arrangements first.

[Ben-Menahem] Now it becomes apparent that Fatah too intends to conduct political activity in East Jerusalem. Fatah will hold elections for its institutions there.

[Al-Barghuthi] Yes, sure. We will do it everywhere, particularly in East Jerusalem.

[Ben-Menahem] Do you believe the police will let you do that?

[Al-Barghuthi] We will not ask its permission.

[Ben-Menahem] You will not ask for police permission?

[Al-Barghuthi] No.

[Ben-Menahem] But you may not engage in political activity in East Jerusalem.

[Al-Barghuthi] Yes, we have a right to deal with politics in East Jerusalem. What is the problem? Is everything closed in East Jerusalem?

[Ben-Menahem] The Fatah camp that opposes the elections says that, in fact, the elections were canceled and that it won.

Samir Subayhat, a senior Fatah activists in the West Bank has said: [passage omitted] I call for the breakup of the Supreme Fatah Committee and for the establishment of a new leadership that would unite Fatah.

Movement activists say that the dispute between the camps is due to escalate in the coming days.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 18 November on page 2 in a report by Roni Shaqed and Hayim Broida adds that "Yasir 'Arafat ordered the annulment of the elections to the Fatah council held in the Ramallah area two weeks ago."]

Al-Rujub on Israeli Criticism of Police Training

TA1711164594 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 17 Nov 94 pp 1, 23

[Report by AL-QUDS special correspondent]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jerusalem—Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, head of preventive security in the West Bank, has said that what happened in Jericho falls within the framework of the Palestinian national effort to set up and build the National Authority's organs and institutions in a way that will serve the supreme national interest. This interest is based on foundations and principles determined by the Palestinian leadership which, under the leadership of President Yasir 'Arafat, is committed to the political process.

Col. al-Rujub added: "Within the context of implementing the political process, the Israelis should respect the Palestinian side's independence and sovereignty as a condition for promoting this process."

Al-Rujub said: "As Palestinians and as Fatah members, we accepted the peace agreement with all its drawbacks. Talk about training wanted men in Jericho is a silly attempt to poison the political climate."

Al-Rujub explained: "Those in the Palestinian national movement and their comrades who hoisted the banner of struggle and participated in the intifadah have adhered to the political process and respected the orders of the Palestinian leadership. This alone is an achievement for the entire peace process."

Al-Rujub said: "If the Israelis do not like this, that is their concern, but we will build our organs and institutions from elements that resisted, struggled against, and confronted the occupation, because they have more right, are better suited, and are more capable of doing so. We will not build them from among those who collaborated with the occupation authorities and their organs or from among those who remained silent when the population resisted the occupation."

Al-Rujub added: "This is our duty toward our strugglers and fighters. The Israelis have no right to scrutinize the identity of each individual who joins our organs." [passage omitted]

To Draw 'Appropriate' Conclusions

TA1711193194 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian security service in the West Bank, says he will draw the appropriate conclusions from the events that occurred during the ceremony in Jericho two days

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ago and, if necessary, he will correct the problems. The inclusion of former fugitives in the Palestinian security service and the chants "Haifa" and "Ashdod" resulted in Israel filing a complaint with the Palestinian Authority. Al-Rujub and Ron Pundaq, one of architects of the Oslo Agreement, were interviewed by Rafi Reshef this afternoon. [passage omitted]

Al-Rujub Office Said To Order Murders

TA1711164794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Orders to interrogate and murder people suspected of collaborating with Israel in the Tulkarm and Qalqilyah region were issued from the office of Jibril al-Rujub, head of the Palestinian security service, last summer, after the signing of the Oslo and Cairo agreements. Testimony to this effect was given by members of a Fatah Hawks squad who were apprehended and tried for the murder of Arabs suspected of collaborating with Israel.

IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers told our correspondent Dani Zaqen that according to the testimony, the orders were given by some of al-Rujub's deputies, but he was in the know. The head of the Fatah Hawks squad is Jamal Shawahinah, who escaped to Jericho and graduated with distinction from Jibril al-Rujub's security service course.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 17 November carries a report by Dani Zaqen which adds the following: "A short time ago, I spoke with Jibril al-Rujub from his office in Jericho. Al-Rujub claims he knows nothing about murders carried out after the Cairo agreement. Asked whether he was aware of what went on before that date, al-Rujub said: Everybody knows I was not growing flowers."]

Orient House Issues Statement on 'Greater Jerusalem'

JN1711171994 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements on his intentions to establish what he described as greater Jerusalem have prompted the Orient House in Jerusalem to issue a statement, explaining the status of the city and the Palestinian constants regarding it. More details in the following dispatch from our Jerusalem correspondent.

[Begin Ibrahim Sajadiyah recording] The press office of the Orient House today issued a statement reacting to the statement given by Israeli prime minister to reporters who accompanied him on the plane that took him to the United States two days ago. He said Israel would maintain what he called greater Jerusalem at the end of the interim period.

The Orient House's statement said these statements, along with Israeli practices in Jerusalem, clearly violate the Palestinian-Israeli agreement which provides that the issue of Jerusalem would be discussed in the final status talks.

The statement added that since Israel has agreed to the principle of talks on Jerusalem and since the Palestinian side is committed to the peace process, Israeli officials should stop these maneuvers and attempts to reverse facts. It said Israelis should commit themselves to the bases and principles of the peace process according to Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, which emphasize the Arab character of Jerusalem and which consider it part of the Palestinian lands.

Concluding, the statement said the Palestinian acceptance of delaying the discussion of the Jerusalem issue until the final stage should prompt Israel to stop all measures to Judaize the city and prejudice its final status. It added this delay does not mean, in any case, relinquishing the firmly-established Palestinian national rights in Jerusalem in its capacity as capital of the Palestinian state. [end recording]

Orient House Denies Link With Security Organ

TA1711181894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement issued by Orient House in East Jerusalem today denied yesterday's remarks by Police Minister Moshe Shahal on the existence of a link between Orient House and the Palestinian preventive security organ. The statement says that those remarks fall within the framework of Israeli attempts to close down Orient House. The statement adds that the role played by Orient House is limited only to the peace process.

Belgian Senators Meet 'Arafat Over Financial Aid

BR1611135794 Groot-Bijgaarden DE STANDAARD in Dutch 16 Nov 94 p 5

[Report by Salomon Bouman: "Belgian Senators Favor Increased Aid for Palestinians"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tel Aviv—Leading figures in the major political parties in the Belgian Senate believe that the Palestinian autonomous territory in the Gaza Strip is in urgent need of economic aid. After speaking for about an hour and a half with Yasir 'Arafat at his office in Gaza, they concluded that the Israeli-Palestinian peace process will be jeopardized if Palestinian self-rule does not succeed in raising living standards in the Gaza Strip.

According to Senator Johan de Roo of the Flemish Christian People's Party, Yasir 'Arafat said that "the people in the Gaza Strip are hungry and discontented." The senator was struck by the poverty, unemployment, and decaying infrastructure he saw during a trip through

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Gaza—including the poor sewer system which is probably the cause of the outbreak of cholera in the area.

Yasir 'Arafat complained to the Belgian politicians about the failure of the promised international aid to arrive. And when money does come, there are so many administrative obstacles to overcome that the 9,000-strong Palestinian police force has been without pay for two months, for example.

The Palestinian leader also claimed that the Israelis are placing many obstacles in their way—such as refusing to allow stones to be transported to Gaza from Hebron on the West Bank of the Jordan to build a port for Palestinian exports.

Frozen Assets

Senator Fred Erdman of the Flemish Socialist Party said that Yasir 'Arafat is also angry with Kuwait and Dubai, where $200 million of Palestinian money is frozen in bank accounts.

The senators report that the Palestinian leader used the word "terrorism" to describe the activities of the Islamic Jihad and Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

In reply to a question from Senator Erdman, 'Arafat even spoke of Palestinians in Gaza who call themselves Iranians and who will not therefore be able to take part in the elections for the Palestinian Government.

The Belgian senators now intend to exert their political influence in Brussels to alleviate the serious socioeconomic crisis in the Palestinian autonomous territory.

They want to see increased European aid to the Palestinians and the aid to be quicker in actually getting through to where it is needed, as a means of speeding up the peace process. The senators are returning to Belgium by way of Jordan and Syria.

'Arafat Appoints al-Khatib Representative in Jordan

JN1711140494 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman—Yasir 'Arafat, head of the Palestinian National Authority has decided to appoint 'Umar al-Khatib as the authority's representative to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan as of 12 November.

This post is in addition to his responsibilities as charge d'Affaires at the embassy of the state of Palestine in Jordan.

'Arafat Receives UNRWA, Red Cross Officials

JN1711142894 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO and the National Authority [NA], has stated the importance of holding legislative elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. He also warned against the negative impact of delaying the delivery of international funds and assistance to the NA. His excellency made these observations during his meeting with Ilter Turkmen, commissioner general of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees [UNRWA].

President 'Arafat also received a message from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev on the peace process. Russian Ambassador to Israel Aleksandr Bovin, conveyed the message to the president during a meeting yesterday.

President 'Arafat received in his office yesterday the chief of the Red Cross in the Middle East. The talks dealt with issues related to the peace process and elections.

Trade Unions To Sign Accord With Israel

BR1711155994 Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian 16 Nov p 9

[Report by Peter Beck: "Israeli And Palestinian Labor Unions To Sign Oslo Agreement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli and Palestinian labor unions will sign an agreement in Oslo the day after the peace prize is awarded. They will also honor Terje Rod Larsen with a prize at the same time. For the first time in its history Histadrut, the Israeli trade union federation, is signing an agreement with an Arab trade union. The signing ceremony will take place on 11 December, probably in the Grand Hotel. The two prize winners, Yasir 'Arafat and Shimon Perez, the "entrepreneurs" on both sides, will also be present at the ceremony.

After months of secret negotiations, interrupted several times because of terrorist acts in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, the two parties signed an international agreement on cooperation in Gaza on Sunday [13 November].

"But Histadrut and the Palestinian trade union federation PGFTU decided to move the formal signing ceremony to Oslo for various reasons. Firstly, because of the awarding of the peace prize, and also in order to honor Terje Rod Larsen with an award," said Dov Randel of Histadrut's international department. The agreement will be signed by Histadrut chairman Chaim Ramon and the chairman of the PGFTU, Shahir Sa'id.

Feather in the Cap

That the Palestinians and the Israelis chose to sign this trade union agreement in Oslo is also a feather in the cap of the LO [Norwegian Trade Union Federation], which has long played the role of instigator, arbitrator, and advisor in the Middle East. Relations between Histadrut and the LO have had their ups and downs; they were very cool for a time during the Intifada, but there has been a thaw in the relationship in recent years.

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"As far back as 1980 we were asked by Kare Sandegren of LO's international secretariat to assist Terje Rod Larsen of the FAFO [expansion unknown] in the role of "door openers" to Israeli society. And ever since the Oslo agreement was signed, we have had close cooperation with the LO, which has also supported the Palestinian trade union federation and provided them with training in trade union work. And the LO has also done focal work in Gaza," Randel said.

Rod Larsen Honored

The two labor unions' award to Terje Rod Larsen is intended primarily as a token of respect, but a "peace fund" will also be built up in his name for the continuing peace process. At the same time, as AFTENPOSTEN reported earlier, a group of Norwegian private individuals will present a prize and a large sum of money to Rod Larsen at the same ceremony.

"Up till now the Israelis and the Palestinians have signed agreements at the politicians' level. However, the agreement between Histadrut and the PGFTU can be said to be at the 'grass roots level.' It will not only be of special concern to normal Palestinians but also affect Israelis a good deal more directly in their daily lives. It will be especially important in protecting the interests of Palestinian workers in Israel," Randel said.

It Will Cost

He made no secret of the fact that this will also cost Histadrut a great deal of money at a time when the labor union is in danger of losing about a million members. These are people who have taken part primarily in the health insurance plan, having been only marginal members of the labor union itself. Histadrut will have to make drastic cutbacks in spending, and many people will lose their jobs in the organization. Stocks and property will have to be sold.

Now that Histadrut is going to have to transfer about 16 million kroner—50 percent of the union dues paid—to the Palestinians over the next two years, there have been protests from unemployed Israelis.

Close Cooperation

The Israeli and the Palestinian trade union federations want cooperation across the whole spectrum. In a letter to the LO's international secretariat, the head of the Histadrut department, Jacques Neriah, says that "we are at the start of a new and exciting era in the region, and it is vital that the peace process be encouraged and supported, in our case, through free labor unions."

Medical insurance for seriously ill people who require follow-up care has been mentioned as a possible area of activity. For Palestinian patients who cannot get proper care in Gaza or the West Bank Histadrut wants to arrange for adequate care in two or three of the best Israeli hospitals. About 5,000 Palestinian workers and their families would be covered in this way.

Histadrut wants to help found various Palestinian cooperatives in the fields of recycling, light transportation companies, fishing, a fund which would provide low-interest loans to members, agricultural cooperatives, and a fund to build up smaller cooperatives which would create jobs locally.

In addition Histadrut wants to help the Palestinians with training for labor union work and union organization, practical equipment, and measures in support of women. There will also be Palestinian-Israeli trade union cooperation in sport.

'Urayqat Urges Israeli Withdrawal, Elections

JN1711172294 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1515 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The National Authority was surprised by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements linking the legislative elections with the amendment of some articles in the Palestine National Charter. Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, information adviser to His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat, said there are no preconditions for holding these elections, which should have been held several months ago according to the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles [DOP]. Abu-Rudaynah said Rabin's statements obstruct the agreement with flimsy pretexts.

In this context, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, minister of local government at the National Authority, said Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin's statements on elections are part of Israeli measures to obstruct and delay the implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli DOP.

'Urayqat called on the co-sponsors of the peace process, particularly the United States, to promptly intervene to ensure the holding of the Palestinian legislative elections and the redeployment of Israeli occupation troops. 'Urayqat stressed the importance of holding the legislative elections in the occupied territories after the withdrawal of Israeli occupation troops from them, as stipulated by the Palestinian-Israeli peace agreement.

It is worth mentioning that Yitzhaq Rabin had earlier said that the Palestinian legislative elections will not be held before some articles in the Palestinian national charter have been amended.

Mufti Urges Rejection of Israeli Citizenship

JN1811072694 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0600 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] His Eminence Shaykh 'Ikrimah Sabri, mufti of Jerusalem and the Palestinian territory, has said that the facilities given by the Israeli occupation forces in terms of granting Israeli citizenship to [Palestinian] citizens seek to Judaize the holy city. His eminence called on citizens not to be dragged into the Israeli scheme, urging the Palestinian people to reject Israeli occupation authorities' intransigence and measures regarding the holy city.

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Qaddumi on DOP, Jerusalem, Relations With Jordan

TA1711192794 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 8

[Interview with Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, by Kawthar Salam in Tunis; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Salam] Do you still have reservations about the Oslo accord, and where do they stem from?

[Qaddumi] When we say we have reservations about the Declaration of Principles [DOP], it is because it has flaws to which we do not agree. We fear that these flaws will harm the Palestinian people's national rights. For example, the recognized foundation for launching a settlement was land for peace. The DOP did not include this provision. Moreover, the sponsors of the Madrid Conference signed as witnesses. This means that they relinquished their task of remaining in the talks between us and the Israelis and left us to continue the negotiations with the Israelis alone. We could have ignored this, had we wanted to negotiate with the Israelis years ago, but we participated in the Madrid Conference so that the United States, which has the power, would pressure Israel to withdraw from the Palestinian territories—that is, if the United States seeks political stability in the region, which would help maintain its interests and preserve international security and peace in the region and the world. Hence, we say that the negotiations we conducted for 22 months through our brothers, under the leadership of Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, adhered to Palestinian principles. This is what led to the prolongation of the talks. Then we went to Oslo, and some of us began negotiating without the knowledge of others. Furthermore, the DOP postponed three basic and central issues. Undoubtedly, we say with utmost clarity that this plan is a risk. All of us admit that we have taken a risk so that we may perhaps find ways by which we can eliminate the flaws in the DOP.

The DOP was followed by other agreements that gradually deviated from Palestinian demands and political principles, but today there is no use in returning to such things. We have said: "The deed has been done." We must address our problems wisely and uphold national consensus. This does not mean that we should exert pressure on the opposition. On the contrary, we have been saying that this is a democratic society in which every Palestinian must have the right to criticize and express himself candidly if we wish to build a democratic society. If Israel attempts to impose its own perception of the agreements, however, this will lead to deadlock.

[Salam] So you are also dissatisfied with the negotiating performance?

[Qaddumi] Who said I am satisfied? I have reservations, but I work through the establishment. I protect the establishment and its work, because disagreement that leads to a split will severely hurt the Palestinian cause. We will express our opposition through the establishment, so that we will prove the soundness of our views through it.

[Salam] If we were to assess inter-Palestinian relations and Palestinian-Arab relations, how would you view your relations with Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon?

[Qaddumi] From the outset, we acted on a decision by the leadership to mold cohesive Arab relations. We managed to restore relations with Syria following a rift. We endeavored to coordinate between the indecisive Arab positions. They became decisive and willing to coordinate with us fully. Then we came out with the DOP. From that point, we steered away from Arab coordination but expected to maintain good relations with Jordan. Many things came about as a result of the experience of unity that we had with Jordan. Joint interests developed between us and our brothers, the Jordanian people. Why do we have a disagreement with Jordan? This does not mean, however, that Jordan does not make mistakes. Perhaps it does.

Those provisions in the Jordanian-Israeli agreement could have been excluded because Jerusalem is under occupation. Why should we raise the issue of religious jurisdiction? Why should we stir up such problems? We could have coordinated positions between us.

When Jerusalem is restored, we will sit and discuss Jerusalem, religious jurisdiction, and the relations of the other parties to Jerusalem. From the aspect of sovereignty, Jerusalem is Palestinian, but there are spiritual ties with many Islamic, Christian, Jewish, and, I say, Arab parties. This fact applies to the refugee problem as well. It concerns Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, and other Arab countries. [passage omitted]

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Algeria

Pelletreau Statement on Islamic Violence Viewed

LD1811093094 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 18 Nov 94

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] APS has said that on 16 November AFP reported highlights of an intervention presented to NATO by Robert Pelletreau, U.S. assistant secretary of state for Middle East affairs.

AFP, however, quoted from the American official's intervention only those parts that conformed with its editorial line relating to Algeria. According to the AFP report, quoting Mr. Pelletreau, the United States is more concerned with the methods being used by the Algerian security forces in fighting the terrorist groups on the battle field than with the brutality those groups show toward civilians, and the United States reiterated its call for open dialogue with the participation of all political forces that oppose the use of violence as a means to attain power.

What is new and noteworthy in Mr. Pelletreau's statement, however, and what AFP has been anxious to overlook, is the fact that Mr. Pelletreau denounced violence. He did indeed denounce the vile acts perpetrated by the Islamic Armed Group [GIA] and the campaign of terror and intimidation conducted by this group. Mr. Pelletreau has underlined that the acts of the GIA have nothing to do with Islam, which calls for tolerance. He added that prominent Islamic figures in Algeria who are sincerely looking for a nonviolent solution to the crisis reject this blind fanaticism. He asked whether this is not the objective set for national dialogue by the head of state, who stresses that all political forces have been invited to this dialogue except those who engage in violence, in order to search for a solution to the crisis in the country. Mr. Pelletreau said that regrettably this firm conviction has clashed with the obduracy of the position of certain people and the procrastination of others.

Envoy to France Reproves U.S. Mideast Policy

NC1811090494 Paris AFP in English 1517 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Paris, Nov 17 (AFP)—Algeria's new ambassador to France lashed out at the US government on Thursday [17 November], alleging that it had double standards with regard to the Islamic fundamentalism which has plunged his country into violence.

In an interview, ambassador Hocine Djoudi said that one cannot "say no to Hamas (the Palestinian fundamentalist movement) and yes to the fundamendalists in Algeria."

He criticised "the selective attitude which absolves some people here and denounces others elsewhere in the interests of a Middle East strategy is absolutely criminal".

Djoudi was responding to a statement Tuesday by a senior US State Department official who said the United States does not believe there is a military solution to Algeria's problems and is concerned over the "excesses by government security forces".

Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau criticised mounting violence by Algeria's radical Islamic groups, but said the US government was also "disturbed by reports of extra-judicial killings, torture and detention without trial" carried out by security forces.

He called on Algeria to take "concrete steps to establish a dialogue with opposition elements, secular and Islamist, willing to work toward a non-violent solution to Algeria's crisis".

Djoudi contrasted Washington's stance with that of Europe, particularly in the south, where he said there was "a much more accurate and acute view of the security and stability stakes in the handling of the (fundamentalist) problem we are all faced with".

More than 10,000 people have been killed since armed Moslem extremists began an insurrection in 1992, targetting hundreds of civilians in terror attacks as well as fighting the security forces.

The violence began after the military intervened in January that year to cancel the second round of Algeria's first free elections, which the now-banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

Egypt

Mubarak Warns of Spread of Muslim Violence

MS1811092994 London THE TIMES in English 18 Nov 94 p 11

[Report on interview with President Mubarak by Christopher Walker at the al-Ittihadiyh Palace; date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Mubarak of Egypt, the Arab leader seen by the West as its main bulwark against Islamic extremism, yesterday gave a warning that, if promised aid was not rapidly given to the Palestinians, the newly autonomous Gaza Strip would explode and spread Muslim violence through Europe.

Speaking to The Times in advance of talks with John Major in London next Monday, Mr Mubarak claimed that little of the $2.2 billion (1.4 billion pounds) pledged from abroad had arrived. "I blame the donors," he said. "The Palestinian problem is not yet resolved. Just because a document has been signed, that means nothing—it has to be implemented. My fear is that there will soon be an explosion in Gaza, more dangerous than

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Afghanistan, and that it will affect all the countries in the region and all the countries on their borders."

His warning coincided with a claim by Islamic Jihad in Gaza that more than 50 volunteers had been recruited for suicide attacks "in any place in which there are Jews".

Talking in the al-Ittihadiyh Palace, the 66-year-old President repeatedly banged his ornate desk to express his frustration over the delay in financing the PLO. "They (donors) should hurry up. In Gaza there are no jobs, no education, no infrastructure, no healthcare. If this goes on, nobody on earth could persuade the people there to stay calm," he said. "An explosion would encourage many fundamentalists to go there and fight alongside the Palestinians. I hope people realise the danger."

The President was anxious to emphasise that Gaza's despair posed a threat to Europe not just Israel, which he accused of failing to implement key elements in the peace deal and thus encouraging anti-PLO militants. "Without giving the Palestinians hope, Gaza could become a base for destabilisation that will affect not only the Middle East," he said. "It is going to affect Europe. It is very easy to go from here to Europe, especially as you have cells of fundamentalists all over Europe now."

He would not comment specifically on the claim that Britain was one country providing a haven for Islamic militants, but said: "Whoever hosts these elements and allows conferences advocating violence is going to pay a very heavy price." Britain is among the nations which have held up aid to the 850,000 Gaza Arabs until it is convinced that Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation, has set up proper auditing procedures.

Mr Mubarak was outspoken in defence of Mr 'Arafat, speaking of him as a prodigal son who had heeded his father's advice. "How can you blame a man if you are holding his hands?" he asked. " 'Arafat has made a very courageous decision. In terms of the money spent on the Middle East problem over the past 50 years, $2.2 billion is nothing—but it is vital if he is to keep his people quiet."

The Egyptian leader also called on Britain and the West to reappraise their view of Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, the Libyan leader. He argued that the colonel was now reformed, a vital buffer against Islamic fundamentalism and no longer a godfather to international terrorism. "He is a very moderate man. He denounces terrorism. He did not accept Carlos ("The Jackal") when he came to him a few years ago. He sent him back immediately, on the next plane."

President Mubarak demanded that the Libyan leader be given "a window of hope" to escape the United Nations sanctions imposed because of his continuing refusal to hand over two agents accused of the 1988 Lockerbie bombing for trial in the West. Not slow to claim credit for what an aide described as "the taming of Colonel al-Qadhdhafi he claimed that if Abu-Nidal, now the world's most wanted terrorist, were in Libya he would be under restraint.

"He (Nidal) is much better in Libya than any other place because Libya is trying to improve its image. So if Abu-Nidal is there, he will be under control," he said. Earlier diplomatic reports claimed that Nidal was under house arrest near Tripoli.

Mr Mubarak refused to give details of the Lockerbie compromise he will be pressing in London, but said any attempt to topple Colonel al-Qadhdhafi would backfire.

"Libya is a very good buffer against (Islamic) terrorism. The militants cannot move from Algeria to Tunisia or Egypt. I have spoken to al-Qadhdhafi several times, and he is much better than he was. I have explained to him what is right and wrong and he is another man now," Mr Mubarak said. "Whether you believe this or not, he is the most moderate element in Libya now."

Egypt is convinced, if the West pushes Colonel al-Qadhdhafi too hard, he could be replaced by his second-in-command, Major 'abd-al-Salam Jallud, who is known to be anxious to resume Libya's role as a terrorist paymaster.

Mr Mubarak was dismissive of accusations by America that Egypt had been regularly breaking Libyan sanctions and of claims in two leading US newspapers that his two sons, one resident in London, had been profiteering from dubious commercial ventures, some involving Libya.

Despite the recent resurgence of terrorist violence, including the October 23 ambush that claimed the life of a second British tourist in two years, the President was adamant that his security forces now had "the criminals" on the run. He ridiculed a suggestion from Washington that he should open a dialogue with the main group, al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah.

"The Americans are living in another area. We made dialogue until they started using machineguns. We could not sit any longer with folded hands. We had to react firmly," he insisted.

The image of the smooth diplomat was suddenly replaced by that of the tough, ruthless former military man when I asked if Iran could ever succeed in overthrowing his moderate regime. "That," he bristled, "is one of the impossibles."

Musa on Peace Process, International Issues

NC1711205494 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that peace in the Middle East can be achieved if Israel withdraws from the territories it occupied in 1967 and if the Palestinian people are granted the right to

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self-determination. He added that, without these two conditions, peace will not be achieved.

In an interview with the Paris-based weekly magazine AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, Musa said the withdrawal from the Golan must be completed in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 425. He expressed the belief that peace between the Arabs and Israel will be achieved within a few years.

On relations with Sudan, Musa stressed that the principles governing Egyptian-Sudanese relations remain constant. He said that Egypt does not accept the partitioning of Sudan or any infringements of its sovereignty. It also does not accept any insults directed at the Sudanese people.

On the sanctions imposed on Libya and the Lockerbie issue, Musa said international legitimacy must be respected, just as the Libyan people's rights and sovereignty must be respected. He added that Libya has severed all ties with terrorism and has expressed its readiness to hand over the two suspects for trial. Therefore, we hope that the sanctions against Libya will not be stepped up and that the trial of the two suspects will be speeded up. It is possible to reach an agreement on the venue of the trial.

Regarding Iraq, Musa explained that the sanctions imposed against it must end eventually. The key to a solution is for Iraq to recognize Kuwait.

Regarding the Bosnian problem, Musa said the European countries should firmly oppose the Serbs' occupation of Bosnia and their attacks on its people and not fuel the conflict in any manner that gives the impression that there is complaisance toward the Serbs.

Effect of Election Results on Clinton Viewed

NC1811093794 Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 14 Nov 94 p 3

[The "Good Morning" column by Sa'id Sunbul]

[FBIS Translated Text] In real and correct democratic systems, the people become the source of authority, not only through talk, but through actions. In a democracy the ruler does not need to learn the facts through reports or his aides; he will learn them through the ballot box.

Last week important elections took place in the United States, in the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the state governorships. The election result showed a landslide victory for the nominees of the opposition Republican Party and an ugly defeat for the nominees of the ruling Democratic Party. For the first time in 40 years the opposing, Republican, party now has the majority in the houses of the Senate and Representatives (Congress). It now has the upper hand when it comes to White House policies.

Once the results were announced Republican leader Robert Dole said: This result is a clear referendum on President Bill Clinton's policies. The President said: The message has arrived. He meant the message the American people have sent the government through the ballot box.

When George Bush was President of the United States he faced many big problems with congressmen, because the Democrats had the majority. When Bill Clinton became President of the United States, replacing George Bush, he did not face this complicated situation, since the majority belonged to his party and numbered among his supporters.

The whole picture has now changed, with the Republicans, who are the opposition, forming the majority in Congress. The U.S. President must take them seriously and attempt to gain their support and appease them before he presents his new projects and laws for approval so that he does not clash with them and find his efforts frustrated by them.

The Democratic Party nominees' defeat in the election and the rise of a Republican majority in Congress does not require or necessitate the resignation of the U.S. President, because the President is elected by the people in free and direct voting. The Democratic Party's loss does not necessarily mean the end of U.S. President Bill Clinton. And it does not mean he has no chance of being reelected once his presidential term is over. The issue rests on the American people's conviction of his performance during the coming two years.

President Clinton swallowed the bitter defeat with great difficulty. After the results were announced he held a news conference and, with a broad smile on his face, said: The American people do not want their government to have a free hand with any opinion. I will respond to the wishes of the people. The message has hit home and I will work according to it.

Russian Official Discusses Trade Problems

NC1711222394 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 13 Nov 94 p 13

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Oleg Davydov, Russian deputy prime minister and minister of foreign economic relations, has stated that Egypt is Russia's most important trade partner in the Middle East region and that his government is eager to adopt all the necessary measures to increase trade with Egypt. He noted that the volume of trade between the two countries now stands at $250 million per year after it used to exceed $1 billion, which is unacceptable in light of the potential of both Egypt and Russia. He added that the coming stage will see the beginning of a new era in bilateral trade relations.

The Russian official pointed out that two agreements for protecting investments and preventing double taxation between Egypt and Russia are under study. The two agreements are expected to be signed during the meeting of the joint economic committee in the first quarter of next year, he added. A cooperation agreement between

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the Russian Chamber of Commerce and the Union of Egyptian Chambers of Commerce [UECC] is expected to be signed in the coming stage to boost relations between businessmen in the two countries, he added.

Davydov pointed out that the economic reform policy currently pursued by the Russian Federation is based on liberalization of prices, privatization of public sector companies, and liberalization of Russia's external economic relations.

Speaking to members of the Egyptian-Russian Branch in the UECC, the Russian deputy premier stressed that the Russian government is ready to give Egypt customs exemptions on a mutual basis. Russia has abolished the customs benefits it had been granting to various world countries, except the 47 states specified by the UN as living below the poverty line. He pointed out that there is a good chance to increase trade with Egypt now that there are no restrictions on imports. The job of the Russian Government at present, he added, is to create an atmosphere conducive to trade growth. He stressed the need to create an infrastructure for trade and for banks and insurance companies to play a leading role in this regard, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises. He added that he had agreed with the Egyptian economy minister to arrange for a meeting between Egyptian and Russian bankers to discuss the possibility of establishing a joint bank, particularly since several world banks now operate in Moscow and none of them is Egyptian. He added: It is in the interest of both of us to let Egyptian banks enter the Russian market, because without banks there will not be sound cooperation. He noted that there is a law in Moscow allowing the government to establish banks with foreign capital, provided the government's share does not exceed 12 percent of the total capital of Russian banks [sentence as published]. [passage omitted]

Abu-al-Su'ud Sultan, chairman of the Egyptian-Russian Branch in the UECC, has noted that a joint company between the two countries is being established, the main objective of which is to promote bilateral trade. The Russian side will contribute 40 percent of its capital and the Egyptian 60 percent. Banks from Egypt and Russia will have shares in this company, he added, noting that a permanent exhibition of Egyptian exports will be opened in Moscow and permanent warehouses for Egyptian exports will be established, and this will be the duty of the Russian side. Muhammad Abu-al-'Aynayn, member of the branch and Chairman of Cleopatra Ceramics Company, has pointed out that abolishing the benefits and exemptions that had been given to Egyptian products has weakened Egypt's exports. He added: We also suffer from the fact that there are no regular maritime lines between the two countries, not to mention the other problems facing the goods during transportation, particularly the risk of robbery. Mahmud Khamis, deputy chairman of the Al-Nassajun al-Sharqiyun Company, confirmed the problems of transportation and the risks involved. In response, the Russian official said: We understand the transportation problems facing goods, and they will be overcome next year when transport lines between the two countries will have been developed. [passage omitted]

The Russian deputy prime minister noted that he had agreed with the Egyptian economy minister to arrange for mutual customs exemptions between the two countries. He pointed out that he cannot talk about the question of debts for the time being and asked Egyptian businessmen to be selective in choosing the Russian companies they want to do business with. He noted that a special list of credible Russian companies is being prepared and will be ready next year. The list, he added, will be available to all those dealing in the Russian market.

Police Kill 4 'Terrorists,' Apprehend 2 Others

NC1711173694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1455 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 17 Nov (MENA)—Egyptian security authorities have foiled a terrorist plot hatched by terrorist leaders abroad to commit crimes against peaceful citizens and undermine the country's security and stability.

A responsible security source in the Interior Ministry has stated that the security forces attacked a number of terrorist hideouts in Upper Egypt, Lower Egypt, and Cairo simultaneously. They arrested two terrorists, killed four others, seized large quantities of arms and ammunition, and large amounts of money.

The security source explained that in pursuance of the State Security Intelligence Department's efforts to foil the criminal plans of fugitive terrorist elements and to strike at their hideouts, investigations revealed that terrorist leaders abroad asked one of their members inside the country, who bears the nom de guerre "al-ustaz," to take over the leadership of the military wing and to reorganize the terrorist group in Upper Egypt.

The source said that in the light of this information, the State Security Intelligence Department used scientific methods and resorted to careful planning. It set up a surveillance network to monitor the movement of the terrorists, including the leader of the military wing, and watched the sugar plantations, slum areas in towns, and remote rural areas with the aid of heat sensors and infra-red rays.

The source said that the plan resulted in the uncovering of the true identity of the terrorist "al-ustaz." It became known that he is terrorist Ahmad Hasan 'Abd-al-Jalil, who was appointed leader of the military wing by fugitive terrorist leader Mustafa Hasan Hamzah, who was sentenced to death in military crime case No. 24/92.

The source said that investigations revealed that the fugitive terrorist leaders abroad had provided terrorist Ahmad Hasan 'Abd-al-Jalil with $140,000 and 221,000

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pounds to finance hostile operations and criminal plans. They also provided him with false identification papers.

Investigations also revealed that this terrorist trained the group's members in Afghanistan on bombing operations for six years. He also facilitated the entry of several terrorists into Egypt after they received high military training in Afghanistan. The terrorists entered the country through Idfu and Nubia in Aswan using desert paths. He also adopted several aliases to cover up his true identity. [passage omitted]

The source said the security forces stormed the hideout of terrorist Ahmad Hasan 'Abd-al-Jalil in Wadi Shahit in the Nubian desert in Aswan Governorate. When he felt that he was surrounded by the security forces, he opened fire on them. The security forces returned the fire, killing him. The security forces found in his hideout three automatic rifles, one Hulwan rifle, a magazine with three bullets in it, six magazines, a quantity of live bullets, 18 highly explosive charges, a timing device, and a quantity of leaflets and forged identification papers.

The State Security Intelligence Department forces, backed by various Interior Ministry units, simultaneously stormed the hideout of terrorist Hammadah Muhammad Lutfi 'Abd-al-Baqi, who was sentenced to death in military crime case No. 2/94. Terrorist leader Ahmad Hasan 'Abd al-Jalil had asked 'Abd-al-Baqi to remain in his hideout and to wait for further instructions. He had also sent him $40,000. The security forces arrested 'Abd-al-Baqi and found in his hideout two mobile phones inside a Samsonite suitcase. The internal circuits of the telephones had been modified so they could be used in remote-controlled bombing operations. They also found large quantities of electronic circuit components consisting of resistors, switches, wires, and lamps which are used in preparing explosive devices. They also found large quantities of delaying action electronic switches, about 5,000 chassis [last word in English] used to make electronic detonation switches, a voltmeter, a full set of hand tools for electronic and electrical circuits, and gluing and welding materials. They also seized 250 grams of an agricultural fertilizer containing nitroglycerine, four liters of concentrated sulphuric acid inside a jerry can, six liters of concentrated nitric acid in bottles, one kg of chemical salt, and scales and weighing devices. They also found four maps marking establishments, banks, landmarks, and important tourist and government installations; chemistry and electronics books; and sketches on how to carry out certain attacks with light weapons. [passage omitted]

The security operations also extended to Upper Egypt. To carry out terrorist operations there, fugitive terrorist Ahmad Hasan 'Abd-al-Jalil had allocated $125,000 which he received from the group's leadership abroad. The security forces stormed a hideout in a sugar plantation in Qalma village in Mallawi district in al-Minya Governorate. Information was received that terrorists 'Isam Karam Hasan, Amin Hasan Ahmad Hasan, and Muhammad Niaz 'Abd-al-Hakim 'Abd-al-'Al who carried out several criminal and terrorist acts in Asyut and al-Minya were hiding there. The three terrorists opened fire on the security forces, which returned the fire, killing all three of them. Three rifles and large quantities of bullets were found on their bodies.

The security forces also put under surveillance terrorist 'Isam 'Abd-al-Raziq Hasan Haridi, who was the liaison man between fugitive Ahmad Hasan 'Abd-al-Jalil and the group's leadership abroad. The surveillance group monitored him leaving his residence in al-Daqahliyah Governorate and driving in a yellow Chevrolet No. 51274 in the direction of Cairo. They arrested him and found with him $10,000 and five forged identification papers. [passage omitted]

Libya

Sudanese First Vice President Concludes Visit

LD1711113094 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1056 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Muhammad al-Zubayr Salih, first vice president of Sudan, and the accompanying delegation left at the end of a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah.

In a statement brother al-Zubayr made to Libyan news agency, JANA, he praised the outcome of his and the accompanying delegation's visit to the Great Jamahiriyah. He pointed out that his meetings during the visit dealt with [word indistinct] relations between the Great Jamahiriyah and Sudan and the conditions the Arab and Islamic nations are experiencing [words indistinct]

He said the stance of the Great Jamahiriyah and that of Sudan is one of pride stemming from the will of one Arab nation of the two brotherly countries, a stance gainst normalization with the Israeli enemy, and stressed that nations can overcome imperialist schemes with their free will and determination.

Speech to UN Addresses International Law Contract

LD1811090194 Tripoli JANA in English 0832 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New York, al Harth 18, JAMAHIRIYA NEWS AGENCY—The Great Jamahiriya has confirmed its interest in consolidating the rule of international law and the actions to enhance its respect. This came in the Great Jamahiriya speech to the United Nations legal committee which is studying the item related to the United Nations international law contract.

The Great Jamahiriya delegation stressed in the United Nations that the Great Jamahiriya is showing a great attention to the basic aims of the United Nations contract of international law, which had been reflected in the ratification of the Great Jamahiriya for several

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multi-lateral agreements and the implementation of the rulings of these agreements in every respect that consolidate these agreements which proves the acceptance of the Great Jamahriiya for the rulings.

The speech indicated that the Great Jamahiriya attaches a considerable importance for the basic rule of settling disputes in peaceful means and the total respect for the International Court of Justice, for which the Great Jamahiriya resorted in three cases, and implemented all rulings by the International Court of Justice which made it enjoy [words indistinct] and praise of the Security Council, the U.N. secretary general and other international organizations.

The Great Jamahiriya delegation emphasised the need to ensure the achievements of the aims of the U.N. international law contract, through the respect of larger and smaller countries, at equal terms of international law and supermacy of international law without being manipulated for the interests of certain imuntries or its disregard in certain other cases.

The Great Jamahiriya delegation called for the need to ensure the rule of international law, to make it stable, and to concentrate on urging all countries to respect the rule of international law, and indicated that the Western states ignored international legitimacy and international law and all its institutions in its dispute with the Great Jamahiriya. That started by the non-respect for the Montreal Convention 1971, resorting to the International Court of Justice and the rules of the charter and the principles of international law and implicating the Security Council deliberately in a legal question.

The Great Jamahiriya delegation confirmed that the western states implicated the Security Council in a legal question with the aim of imposing unfair sanctions on the Great Jamahiriya to serve their political interests. The delegation confirmed that these sanctions violate the spirit of international law and makes smaller states lose any hope in the credibility of the security Council and the United Nations Organization.

Minister Refuses Certificates for Border Crossing

NC1511175694 Paris AFP in English 1514 GMT 15 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tunis, Nov 15 (AFP)—A border crossing row between Libya and Tunisia appeared stalemated Tuesday [15 November] as Libya refused to issue medical certificates which Tunisia said it required from some foreigners wishing to leave.

Libya will not give foreigners bound for Tunisia certificates required by the authorities there that they are not suffering from plague, the Libyan health minister al-Baghdadi al-Mahmudi, told AFP on Tuesday. "It's impossible to issue such certificates because there are no cases of plague or any other contagious illness in Libya," al- Mahmudi told AFP by telephone from Tripoli.

Al-Mahmudi said that the World Health Organisation had confirmed the absence of plague in Libya.

Tunisia has only one border crossing with Libya, at the southern town of Ra's Jadir. Since Monday evening it has required foreigners from Libya to produce certificates that they are not suffering from plague "issued by Libyan medical authorities."

A diplomat holding a certificate signed by an embassy doctor was refused entry to Tunisia because border guards said the requirement was for a certificate from "hospitals or the Libyan health ministry", diplomatic sources said.

Libyan border authorities have for two weeks imposed a requirement that foreigners from some African countries, including Tunisia, hold cholera vaccination certificates.

Some observers believe the new Tunisian measure may be in retaliation for the Libyan requirement.

Tunisia on Monday lifted a ban imposed Saturday on foreigners entering or leaving Libya via Ra's Jadir.

But customs officials began turning back foreigners other than citizens from the Arab Maghreb Union—Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania—on the grounds they were not holding certificates showing they were plague-free.

Libya has been subjected to an international air embargo since 1992 and its only practicable land frontiers are through Egypt and Tunisia.

Western diplomatic sources in Tunis said the Tunisian moves would dissuade Western businessmen, particularly Europeans, from travelling to Libya via Tunisia.

But many people would be put off by the alternative through Egypt which involves a gruelling 2,000 kilometre, (1,250 mile) drive to reach Tripoli, the sources said.

Sudan

Supreme Council for Peace Continues Session

EA1711174594 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Supreme Council for Peace [SCP] continued its session at Friendship Hall this morning under the chairmanship of Police Major General George Kongor, the vice president of the Republic, who affirmed that the peace process emanates from principles firmly entrenched in Sudanese society. He said the SCP will strive to achieve peace in the country. Discussion then continued on papers presented to the council by its general secretariat, the peace and development foundation, and state governors.

Mr. Philemon Genaro Majok, member of the council and one of the returnees from the opposition, spoke during the session. He praised the decision to establish

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the SCP. He stressed that peace emanating from within depends on mutual trust. He demanded that attention be paid to displaced people and returnees. He described the situation of the opposition abroad, saying it is now manipulated by foreign intelligence services and working to bring personal ambitions to realization. He emphasized that the time has come for peace to materialize from within.

Rebel Spokesman Addresses Council

EA1711214994 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Bashir, president of the Republic, has received a message from two returnees, Simon Mori, the official spokesman of the rebel united faction, and (Enyagi Onu), stating that after belonging to the rebel movement for 10 years, they have finally concluded that the problem could be solved internally. They demanded that meetings be organized for them with intellectuals and leaders of the Anuak ethnic group to which they belong, to enable them to confirm that their presence in Khartoum is not in their personal capacities, but as Anuak leaders and because decisions on the destiny of a society by [word indistinct] of an ethnic group should not be made without the participation of the people. They said in the message that they want to work to keep Riak Machar's forces out of the Pachala and (Akoyi) areas, the home of the Anuak. They added that the attacks on their areas by other tribes waging war against the government are an affront to the Anuak tribe.

Mr. Simon Mori said he is pleased to have come home. He said the failure of all the negotiations held between the government and the rebel movement is due to the intransigence of John Garang and Riak Machar, to whom the meaning of peace is opposition in order to provoke war. He said during this morning's session of the Supreme Council for Peace [SCP] that Garang and Machar coexist only with warmongers. Mr. Simon Mori called on the government to assist the returnees to resettle. He said: We must return to our areas and develop them.

Simon Mori stressed that the setting up of the SCP constitutes a mortal blow to the rebel movement, saying that peace coming in from outside can never materialize. He said the internal peace process is proving a success, adding that negotiations should be held on a give-and-take basis. He said Garang and Machar want to have everything their way without making any concession to the government. Simon Mori affirmed that national unity, not self-determination, will bring about peace.

Vice President Returns From Libya, Comments

EA1811105394 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The first vice president of the Republic, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, returned to the country yesterday evening after a six-day visit to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah. During the visit, he held several meetings with the internationalist leader, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, and some other Libyan officials.

In a statement he made to our reporter, Maj. Gen. al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih announced that the visit had been successful, positive, and had achieved good results, particularly in the sphere of integration between the two countries. He pointed out that the ministerial committee on integration would meet in Khartoum next month to discuss developments in the integration plan.

The first vice president of the Republic added that he discussed with Col. Qadhdhafi international and regional issues of mutual interest and the need for Arab-Islamic coordination so as to confront the current imperialist provocations.

Garang Denies Leaving, Calls For Opposition Meeting

MM1711160694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p2

[Report by 'Uthman Mirghani: "John Garang Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: We Told the Government It Could Never Defeat Us Militarily; Our Call for Opposition Meeting Did Not Exclude Anyone"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London—Colonel John Garang, who is leading the war in southern Sudan, has denied having left his position in the south to visit Britain or any other place.

In a telephone interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, he said that the claim that he was in Britain because of the disappointing military situation was a "ridiculous" laughable joke. He added: "I am speaking now from my position in the south and my morale is extremely high. Had I visited Britain, the whole world would have known about it because to enter Britain you need a visa and there are other procedures. Anyone interested in verifying that can check with the British immigration authorities."

Garang said that the last time he traveled was for the purpose of attending the African IGADD [Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development] committee meetings in Nairobi. He said that when he travels he does so openly and meets with reporters and officials and holds press conferences.

In reply to the Sudanese officials' claim that he is finished militarily and politically, Garang said: "If I am finished militarily and politically, what is their (government) problem? Why should they concern themselves with someone who is finished? That is just daydreaming and wishful thinking. We are here and will continue to be here. We have told the government of the (National Islamic) Front [NIF] that it could never defeat us militarily however hard it tries."

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Garang said that, since 24 October, the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement [SPLM] has been facing attacks on several fronts near Kapeota, Morobo, Torit, and Kajo Kaji. He added: "We have confronted all the attacks, and the battles are continuing."

On his call for a meeting of the political opposition in southern Sudan, Garang said that the replies he received

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so far were positive. He said: "We hope the meeting will be held inside Sudan, for many reasons, the most important being to demonstrate our solidarity and our presence inside our country." He emphasized that his movement would "provide security for the participants" in the meeting.

Asked if his call for such a meeting overlooked some forces in the opposition grouping, he said: "We have not excluded anyone. We have addressed an invitation to all forces of the opposition."

He expressed hope that the opposition forces would agree on a unified concept regarding the intensifying crisis in the country.

Asked if the proposed meeting would be an occasion for announcing a comprehensive political program, including a [draft] peace agreement, Garang said: "We in the opposition are not at war with one another. So, what we need is not a peace agreement but an agreement on a strategy for the removal of the regime and then a program for the transitional period and beyond, including the form of government in the country. We hope that our forthcoming meeting will produce such an agreement on these matters."

He said that the grouping included forces with different concepts sometimes, and therefore bridging the concepts and achieving agreement on fateful issues is important despite the fact that it is sometime difficult to arrange meetings. He said that contacts between the forces of the grouping never stopped but what is needed now is agreement on a program, issues of the next phase, and a work strategy for the opposition.

Compulsory Military Training for Students Ordered

AB1711173694 London BBC World Service in English 1515 GMT 17 Nov 94

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It seems the Khartoum Government is preparing for conflict in the country to go on for the foreseeable future. It is now introducing what amounts to a form of military conscription, as Alfred Taban reports in this telex from Khartoum:

Sudan's leader, Hasan al-Bashir, has announced that his government is determined to make military training compulsory for students in the final classes of the basic education stage and at secondary school. General al-Bashir was this morning quoted by the official SUDAN NEWS AGENCY, SUNA, as saying that such training helps create a responsible and disciplined generation that will be able to undertake the task of nation building. The People's Defense Force was formed five years ago to help the Army crush the rebellion in southern Sudan, spearheaded by the SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army].

All secondary school students have to undergo a six-week military training at one of several camps of the People's Defense Force before enrolling at any university or institution of higher education. Those admitted to the next academic year began training today. Those who dodge the training are usually denied final admission. Al-Bashir said military training has had a positive impact on the homeless, who became reformed after the training and became useful members of society. He directed all the public and private institutions in the country to cooperate fully with the compulsory National Service Program and give opportunities to the youth to engage in what he called, this patriotic role.

Running concurrently with the People's Defense Force training is the compulsory national conscription service, which applies to those aged 33 and below. They are expected to enroll for national service for between one year and two years. Those who do not serve in this program are normally denied jobs in both the private and public sectors and are prevented from traveling abroad.

Tunisia

Foreign Ministry Condemns Serb Attacks on Bihac

LD1811012494 Tunis Tunis-7 Television in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Statement issued by the Foreign Ministry on 17 November]

[FBIS Translated Text] Tunisia strongly condemns the recent Serb attacks on the Bosnian town of Bihac which was declared a safe area by the United Nations. Tunisia strongly condemns the attacks that targeted besieged civilians in the town.

These attacks are proof once again of the continued ethnic cleansing by the Serb forces in Bosnia, challenging the international community from anew.

Tunisia urges the Security Council at the United Nations to take speedy measures to implement United Nations resolutions on Bosnia to put a stop to these attacks which have not been met, until now, with their deserved deterrence.

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Foreign Minister al-Sahhaf on Sanctions, Issues

JN1711191494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1750 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf by Kamal Tarabayh; place and date not given; from the "Political Week" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Tarabayh] Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad al-Sahhaf, did you anticipate the UN Security Council's refusal, incited by Washington, to lift the sanctions imposed on Iraq, despite Iraq's official and unequivocal recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty and independence?

[Al-Sahhaf] In fact, this is not surprising. I would like to clarify some points. The Americans usually try to turn the Security Council's bimonthly review, which is based on Paragraph 21 of Resolution 687, into political vituperations. Naturally, we refuse to be dragged into political vituperations. We objectively and seriously work with the Security Council members to discuss the requirements of Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687. Iraq has fully fulfilled those requirements. Moreover, Iraq's recognition of the State of Kuwait and its territorial integrity and political independence is a clear and unequivocal stand, as you have mentioned. As noted by the Revolution Command Council's decree and the Iraqi National Assembly's statement, it is an Iraqi response to emphasize Iraq's permanent desire for security and stability for everyone in our region—the Gulf Arab Gulf region. Many Security Council members and many friendly nations have talked about this issue. Therefore, Iraq has taken this major step, which is not among the requirements of Paragraph 22 of resolution 687. It is meant to reaffirm that Iraq is seriously and positively dealing with the Security Council as an international institution and not as an institution affiliated with the United States. I reiterate that it is not surprising for the United States to attempt to force the Security Council or some of its members, led by the United States itself, to the atmosphere of political vituperations. We disdain to do that.

[Tarabayh] Mr. Minister: In a recent statement in Baghdad, you expected that the sanctions will be lifted gradually by the UN Security Council. Do you have confirmed information in this regard?

[Al-Sahhaf] We are constantly working with the Security Council member states. You must have observed the constant and active coordination between Iraq and the Russian federation. Mr. Kozyerv's two visits to Baghdad and the steps that have been taken unambiguously point to serious work between Iraq, the Russian Federation, France, China, Spain, Brazil, and other nonpermanent Security Council members states, which constitute a majority inside the council. This coordination is taking place in accordance with a clear and explicit understanding to arrive at a sound and legal interpretation of UN Security Council Resolution 687. We have been quite successful in convincing these countries that Iraq has actually and fully implemented all requirements of Resolution 687, particularly Paragraph 22 of this resolution, which means lifting the ban imposed on the exportation of commodities of Iraqi origin. We are talking about a paragraph which places obligations on the Security Council when Iraq fulfills its obligations, which I believe you know. Those obligations are: Destroying weapons of mass destruction, inspecting factories and making sure that they are no longer capable of producing such weapons, installing a monitoring system by the Special Commission in those factories to ensure that such weapons will not be produced again, and verifying that those factories are not capable of producing such weapons in the first place. Iraq is required to implement those conditions in cooperation with the Security Council and the Special Commission affiliated with it and the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency. Afterward, under Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687, the Security Council will have an extremely clear commitment to lifting the ban imposed on the exportation of commodities of Iraqi origin and to lifting the ban on financial and commercial transactions concerning those Iraqi commodities. When we say a gradual lifting of the embargo we mean that the Security Council should start honoring its commitments since Iraq has implemented and honored its commitments. Therefore, the Security Council should lift the ban imposed on the exportation of commodities of Iraqi origin, chief among which, of course, is oil. We consider that a partial lifting of the blockade. Afterward, we will demand that the other forms of the blockade be lifted.

[Tarabayh] What about the Security Council's demand for an immediate release of the Kuwaiti POW's and what about the palaces the Security Council says President Saddam Husayn possesses?

[Al-Sahhaf] Mr. Kamal: No POW or hostage exists in Iraq. The repetition of this issue is part of the political polemics and the hostile propaganda campaigns against Iraq. Since 1991, when aggression against Iraq stopped, we have handed over all the POW's, whether they are Americans, Britons, Italians, French, Saudis, and Kuwaitis, or whether they belong to other sides that took part in the 30-state aggression against Iraq. We have handed over all the POW's in accordance with documents and through the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC]. Then several meetings were held between Iraq and these parties in Saudi Arabia and Geneva in order to draw up rules of dealing according to international standards, as well as efforts to search for the missing. Since then, we, as well as these parties, have been working with the ICRC to provide information and to look for people missing in a storm they call the Desert Storm. This storm took away some people, and we are trying to detect the fate of these people in accordance with international standards. He who raises the issue of the POW's seeks political propaganda and wants to maintain the atmosphere of enmity and hatred for his

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lowly political purposes. Therefore, we, the Iraqis, are fully cooperating with the ICRC. The last meeting took place in Geneva less than a month ago. We gave them information about more than 190 people, who were mentioned in lists. The ICRC asked us to search for these missing people. We will continue to cooperate with the ICRC.

Regarding the cheap talk on palaces, I can say that the press carried the eloquent answer leader President Saddam Husayn made during a meeting of the Council of Ministers yesterday. It was a reply to those who do not want Iraq to build itself. I have nothing to add to the reply.

[Tarabayh] Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf: Former French Defense Minister Chevenement, who recently toured Jordan, Iraq, and Israel, told our radio that Baghdad will refrain from opposing the Iraqi-Palestinian agreement. My question is as follows: What is the true Iraqi position on the Arab-Israeli peace process, and is Iraq ready to begin public talks with Israel for reconciliation and normal relations?

[Al-Sahhaf] I have no comment on Chevenement's statements. I was one of the Iraqis who talked to Chevenement. We did not touch on these issues because we have no interest in them at all. A criminal blockade was imposed on our country over four years ago. We focus our interests in Iraq's relations and its efforts to lift this unjust and criminal blockade on our people. We do not want to comment on the other trivial matters because we are not interested in them at all. I have nothing to add.

[Tarabayh] Is Iraq not interested in the Arab-Israeli conflict and in the Arab-Israeli peace process? Iraq is a pan-Arab country.

[Al-Sahhaf] Our country is a pan-Arab one, but we are not interested in what is taking place.

[Tarabayh] Much has been said about secret talks or contacts between Iraqi and Israeli officials recently and several years ago. What is your reply?

[Al-Sahhaf] Deputy Prime Minister Tariq 'Aziz and several Iraqi journalists, particularly the Iraqi press adviser in Amman, said that this campaign was unfounded. These parties are using very cheap ways to create imaginary stories. This issue is unfounded and will never have any bases. Those who wish such things will die before seeing them.

[Tarabayh] It is strange that Iraq does not take a position on the peace process and the negotiating process in the region.

[Al-Sahhaf] We have no comment on this issue.

[Tarabayh] Mr. Minister, let's move now to another topic, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Washington has decided to halt its monitoring of compliance with the ban on arms shipments to Bosnia but, at the same time, it insists on blocking food and medical supplies to Iraq. What do you think of this American position?

[Sahhaf] I think it is now known in international politics and contemporary political literature that the term double standards was coined by Iraq and then spread around the world. Perhaps, what is taking place in Bosnia-Herzegovina is a glaring example of the tyrannical forces applying double standards. You know that Bosnia-Herzegovina is a complex issue. As to how they interpret things to suit them and their selfish policies, the victims are not the Bosnians, but the peoples of the world, especially those of the south. Take, for example, the case of Iraq and the tragedies in Africa and the Carribean and other parts of the world. If double standards become the norm and international law is turned into a highly dangerous game founded on power being used accordingly and whimsically, away from international law and the UN charter, we will see a thousand Bosnias.

[Tarabayh] Mr. Minister, let's now return to regional affairs. Is the road open to an Arabian Gulf reconciliation, specifically between Iraq on the one hand and Saudi Arabia and Kuwait on the other? Does your country have a definite proposal to promote that end?

[Al-Sahhaf] We have opened our hearts and stretched our arms to whoever has opened his heart and extended a hand in good faith to Iraq to achieve cooperation and solidarity so that we may be part of broader Arab cooperation and solidarity. This goes for our brothers in the Gulf, as it does to other Arabs.

[Tarabayh] Kuwait's foreign minister said reconciliation between Kuwait and President Saddam Husayn is out of the question. How do you react?

[Al-Sahhaf] I will not comment on baloney. However, I am talking about serious contacts and political positions. For example...

[Tarabayah, interrupting] Have there been contacts with Gulf states?

[Al-Sahhaf] Yes. I want to explain to you.

[Tarabayh] Please do.

[Al-Sahhaf] On the pan-Arab level, an initiative was launched by the Arab League secretary general more than a year ago. Iraq responded positively to that initiative. Iraq presented a detailed working paper incorporating numerous accurate and detailed proposals to forge Arab solidarity on sound bases that take account of the interests of the Arabs and lead to our coming together and defending our interests. Iraq has had close and friendly and brotherly contacts with our brothers in Oman and Qatar and Bahrain. We will not leave anyone out as long as there is reciprocity. As for those who speak baloney, that is their choice.

[Tarabayh] Mr. Minister, we will stay within the Arab framework. The phenomena of growing violence in

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Algeria are about to topple the pillars of the state and society. How do you view what is taking place in Algeria and who do you primarily blame for what happened and what is happening?

[Al-Sahhaf] We are closely following the regrettable events in fraternal Algeria. Our hearts, sentiments, and stands are with our brothers in Algeria. We hope that sisterly Algeria will rid itself of all that is disturbing its security, stability, and progress. We do not interfere in others' affairs in any way whatsoever. However, speaking in general about a sisterly Arab country, we say that we are for the safety and sovereignty of Algeria. We support all that strengthens sisterly Algeria and helps it overcome any impasse or difficulties so that it can continue its progress.

[Tarabayh] Mr. Minister, despite the severance of ties between Baghdad and Damascus and despite the economic and social troubles of Iraq, there must be a word about developments on the Syrian-Israeli negotiating track. Do you agree with Damascus that it is the Israeli Government which is obstructing progress on this track by refusing to implement the international legitimacy resolutions?

[Al-Sahhaf] I have no comment on this subject. Our relations with Syria were cut off a long time ago, as you know, and they were the ones who started that.

[Tarabayh] Is it possible to restore ties with Syria and Lebanon? Are their attempts in this regard?

[Al-Sahhaf] We welcome any attempt to restore ties between Iraq and Lebanon. I strongly regretted the severance of ties by our brothers in Lebanon. We seek to restore them and welcome any initiative in this direction. We have all appreciation and respect for our brothers in Lebanon. We know well that they harbor similar feelings for us. However, the two sides are aware of the surrounding circumstances.

[Tarabayh] On the international level, how do you assess the French Government's political, economic, and diplomatic stands toward Iraq?

[Al-Sahhaf] We greatly appreciate the French Government's stands vis-a-vis every possible practical step to restore the distinguished relations between France and Iraq. We highly value the French political stands at the Security Council. We try to keep in touch with our friends in (?Paris) in order to expand the area of bilateral coordination on every point on which we feel there is a common position, especially with regard to lifting the unfair embargo on Iraq. We continue our contacts and we are very pleased with this. Within the framework of bilateral ties, you know that Iraq has expressed a certain desire to discuss all areas of cooperation and Iraq is eager to rebuild strong relations between the two sides in all areas of economic, scientific, and trade cooperation. We will achieve this, God willing. We are pleased that the French firms and competent French quarters have the same tendency. We will work together so that Iraq and France will have the strongest ties in all areas. God willing, once the embargo is lifted, the Iraqi-French relationship will be positive and very fruitful.

Envoy on Arab Solidarity, Albright Remarks

JN1711204894 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has reiterated its concern about the establishment of good-neighborly relations in the region and about bolstering pan-Arab solidarity among Arab countries. Dr. Nabil Najm, Iraq's representative to the Arab League, said Iraq supports every serious effort to preserve the supreme Arab interests and to set up objective foundations for inter-Arab relations based on the principles of mutual respect, noninterference in domestic affairs, and cementing bilateral and multilateral relations among Arab countries.

In a statement to the Egyptian paper AL-AHRAR published today, Najm called for positive stands and an effective move to lift the embargo imposed on Iraq in order to establish a state of stability, security, and comprehensive, durable peace in the region.

Najm urged the Arab League and its members to adopt responsibe stands now that all pretexts that have obstructed the lifting of the unjust blockade have lost their grounds. He indicated that the voices that want to exclude the Arab League and the Arab solution do not seek the Arab nation's interests.

Ambassador Nabil Najm ridiculed the allegations of the U.S. delegate to the United Nations on the process of reconstruction in Iraq. He said Iraqi arms and funds have reconstructed all that the malicious war destroyed. He said that what the U.S. delegate cited has nothing to do with the UN Security Council resolutions from the legal and logical point of view . Rather, he said, the U.S. delegate's remarks reflect the U.S. animosity and hatred of Iraq.

Revolution Command Council Decree on Foreign Gifts

JN1711170494 Baghdad AL-QADISIYAH in Arabic 8 Nov 94 p 2

[Revolution Command Council Decree No. 190]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The Republic of Iraq

The Revolution Command Council

Decree No. 190, dated 25 Jumada al-Awwal, 1415 Hegira, corresponding to 30 October, 1994

Decree

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Based on the provisions of Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the Revolution Command Council has decreed the following:

1. If any government official or employee or any person in charge of a public service receives a gift from a foreign or a non- Iraqi party in any way, he should report it regardless of its value within 15 days if he is inside Iraq and within 30 days if he is outside Iraq. The gift shall then be registered as revenue for the treasury.

2. The gift shall be returned to the person who received it if its price is less than 200 dinars.

3. If the gift is not reported or is used in any way, the recipient shall be put in prison or shall be made to pay four times the value of the gift or shall be punished with both, and the gift shall be confiscated or its value shall be paid by the recipient.

4. The provisions of the abovementioned second and third paragraphs do not affect gifts given to someone by an Iraqi or non- Iraqi party in appreciation of his contribution to a scientific, literary, arts, or sports contest or to any other similar area.

5. The finance minister shall issue instructions to facilitate the application of the provisions of this decree.

6. Any article conflicting with the provisions of this decree shall be considered invalid.

7. This decree shall be implemented as soon as it is published in the official gazette.

[Signed] Saddam Husayn, chairman of the Revolution Command Council

Writer: U.S. Troop Deployment Figures Misleading

JN1711171694 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 10 Nov 94 p 1

[Article by Nuri Najm al-Marsumi: "Diagnose Ailment, Then Prescribe Medication"]

[FBIS Translated Text] It seems the Kuwaitis have started to wake up. Having been presented beforehand with the bill listing the costs of the latest deployment of American troops to Kuwait in the recent crisis, the Kuwaitis seem to think the cost charged by the American "mechant of security" is exorbitant. It is thought by some that the cost exceeded the more than $30 billion laid out in the effort to reinstate the al Sabah dynasty, thanks to American media misrepresentation that painted an unprecedented act of plunder as a "war of liberation".

According to facts and figures recently published by reliable official sources about the cost of the most recent deployment, the United States began dispatching troops to Kuwait only after the latter's foreign minister agreed to foot the $500 million bill covering the first five days of the troop buildup, plus $5 million per day, in addition to $20 million to cover the cost of the troops placed on the alert but not moved to the Arabian Gulf. Worse still, while the United States officially announced that it had sent 30,000 troops, the actual number deployed was a mere 3,000. The cost is estimated in accordance with declared official figures.

How can it be that the greatest nation on earth fiddles the figures to steal in broad daylight!? With the glaring absence of plausible grounds to burden Kuwaiti taxpayers with these expenses, Kuwaitis have been grumbling loudly about the presence of American troops in the region. A cartoon in a Kuwaiti daily likened Kuwait to a cow being milked. The day before yesterday, a Kuwait parliamentarian asked: Does it take all this troop buildup to defend Kuwait!? As far as the United States is concerned, he added, Kuwait is a virtual oil barrel; if it were not for oil, the Americans would not be here.

Writer Links Iran Attack to Region Power Struggle

JN1711172694 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 9 Nov 94 p 2

["Standpoint" column by Hadi Daniyal: "Foolish Aggression"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Arab saying: What is normal is not surprising, is an apt comment on the recent Iranian attack with three surface-to-surface missiles on Iraqi territory. This assault falls in line with the repeated cowardly attacks behind which Iran stands so shamefully naked and sometimes transparent and exposed. The present aim of the attack is to provide proof to the Zionists and the Americans of the Tehran rulers' readiness to harm Iraq and to depend on them once more to prevent any strong feeling by the Iraqi citizen and his wise leadership that they have succeeded in preventing the 30-state aggression and the chapter of treachery and treason from achieving their aims, confronting the unfair blockade and its objectives, overcoming their crises, crossing to the bank of relief, stability, and security, and resuming their cultural march and historical role.

If the Tehran rulers want to keep reminding us that they come from that same deluded lineage which makes whoever sits on the Persian throne imagine that the stability of his throne is only possible through aggression on the Arab neighbor, then their recent attack to curry U.S.-Zionist favor and to address a clear message to Washington and Tel Aviv, which recently portrayed Tehran as a source of fundamentalist terrorism, must be stopped.

Tehran is ready to play the role for which the Shah had prepared Iran, namely, the role of the guardian of U.S. interests in the region alongside the Zionist entity.

Tehran was afraid that U.S. presence in the Arab Gulf would deprive it of this dream role. But now, with the coincidence of Washington's readiness to withdraw its

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forces from the region, it is reminding the U.S. Administration that it is qualified to undertake what the U.S. forces had intended to undertake against Iraq.

The ayatollahs, who are still captive to the delusion of their fathers and forefathers, ignore two basic facts:

1. The U.S. Administration has already assigned the Zionist entity with the task of protecting the interests of Washington and Tel Aviv. Tehran and its rulers will have to be satisfied in the next political phase with the same role the Gulf rulers have accepted for themselves. But it seems that Rafsanjani is trying to convince the United States that he is the right man for this phase.

2. The world realizes more than before that Iraq is the righteous, fair, and strong regional power which is qualified historically to curb the defiance and ambitions of the deluded regional forces, whether they are Iranian or Zionist, and that Baghdad is the one which will create the regional balance of power which will prevent U.S. interests from monopolizing the oil wells.

Tehran has not yet realized that attack on Iraq is attack on humanity and its strategic interests and that the state of evil is doomed to weakness.

Columnist Laments 'Skyrocketing' Food Prices

JN1711201794 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 6 Nov 94 p 2

[Article by Sabah al-Lami: "Take it Easy on Prices; Have Mercy on Consumers"]

[FBIS Translated Text] No sooner had Iraqi civil servants received their first "fat" 2,000-dinar pay check, than the prices of staples shot up by between 50 and 100 percent.

The price of one kilogram of eggplants that last week sold for 50 dinars yesterday shot up to 100 dinars. Aubergines, previously sold at 40 dinars, yesterday went for 90 dinars for the kilo. A kilogram of tomatoes that was last week sold for 75 dinars was yesterday offered at 150 dinars; potatoes old price was 90 dinars; yesterday's was 275.

Yesterday, consumers were charged 100 dinars for a kilo of green beans, 900 dinars for a kilo of dried beans, 75 dinars for a kilo of onions, 50 dinars for a kilo of carrots, 75 dinars for a kilo of spinach, 100 dinars for a kilo of cowpeas, 80 dinars for a kilo of green peppers, 60 dinars for a kilo of leafed-spring onions, 75 dinars for a kilo of leafless spring onions, 350 dinars for a kilo of lentils, 450 dinars for a kilo of sugar, 110 dinars for a kilo of whole wheat flour, 150 dinars for a kilo of flour, 180 dinars for a kilo of al-hibbiyah [Iraqi vernacular for a food item], 240 dinars for a kilo of clover, 500 dinars for a kilo of red cowpeas, 500 dinars for a kilo of sesame, 1,000 dinars for a kilo of yeast, 200 dinars for a kilo of crushed wheat, 300 dinars for a kilo of parched and crushed wheat, 500 dinars for [measurement unit unspecified] fat that previously sold for 300 dinars, 700 dinars for a kilo of mutton, and 600 dinars for a kilo of beef!!

How are we to react to these skyrocketing prices? And how highly paid must an Iraqi civil servant be to make ends meet, when any salary increase is eroded by skyrocketing prices?

Given that over the past four years, merchants and traders have sought to make the largest possible margins of profit, state agencies must do something to make sure that whatever pay raises are decided are not automatically erased by inflationary prices.

For the state to look the other way will only whet the appetite of unscrupulous traders to impose ever heavier burdens on consumers.

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Rabin 'Hints' at Support for U.S. Aid to Syria

TA1811155794 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 18 Nov 94 pp 1, 2

[Report by Hillel Kuttler in Denver]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin hinted yesterday that Israel would support US economic aid to Syria should a peace treaty be reached.

At the same time, he attacked Likud partisans who oppose a US-led observer force on the Golan Heights as part of an agreement.

"A treaty without economic assistance is liable to hurt the peace process," Rabin told Israeli journalists aboard his Air Force plane on a flight here from Los Angeles.

He refused to confirm that he was referring to Syria, but maintained that US financial assistance has helped secure the Israeli-Egyptian peace.

"One-third of the US foreign aid (of $15 billion annually) is to Israel and Egypt, which strengthens the notion that attacking aid... is liable to harm what's been achieved," Rabin said.

He also said he is "amazed" by Likud claims that a potential US force on the Golan could "endanger the notion of US-Israeli strategic cooperation."

This is especially so, he charged, since the Likud itself "set the Sinai precedent" in permitting a multinational force to monitor the Israeli-Egyptian treaty.

"The American public has not been worried that for 15 years, there have been about 1,000 US soldiers in the international Sinai force," Rabin said. "I think that if and when we reach a peace treaty with Syria, a monitoring force like this to prevent attacks is more important even than in Sinai."

Rabin is due to make the case in Washington next week for the continuation of Israel's $3b. annual aid package.

Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich told reporters aboard the plane that Rabin will speak by telephone next week with incoming Senate foreign relations committee chairman Jesse Helms.

Government To Oppose EC Plan on Syrian Embargo

TA1711184894 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The EC wants to lift the weapons embargo it imposed on Syria in the past. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik says that a report that reached Jerusalem indicates that a decision to this effect could be made within the next 10 days, after the EC became convinced of the sincerity of what it termed Damascus' confidence-building measures vis-a-vis Israel and the West over the past year.

Israel will oppose the lifting of the embargo, and apparently the United States will also express reservations about this move.

Rabin Views Likud Fight Against U.S. Deployment

TA1711195394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1900 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has criticized the Likud's activity in the U.S. Jewish community which is aimed at creating opposition to the deployment of U.S. soldiers on the Golan Heights. Our correspondent Arye Golan reports that speaking with correspondents aboard an Air Force plane on its way from Los Angeles to Denver, Mr. Rabin said that the Likud activity could encourage U.S. isolationism and that financial aid to Israel could also be harmed eventually. Mr. Rabin also said that the Likud's policy of torpedoing an agreement with Syria is dangerous, because it could harm the strategic cooperation between Israel and the United States.

Mr. Rabin is currently addressing a convention of the Jewish federations in Denver, Colorado.

Netanyahu, Rabin Criticizes Lobby Opposing U.S. Troops

TA1811115794 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu makes it clear that the three Likud members—Yosef Ben-Aharon, Yig'al Karmon, and Yoram Etinger—who are lobbying the Congress against placing U.S. troops on the Golan Heights are expressing their private opinions and are not working on behalf of the Likud. This was reported by the Likud spokesman to our correspondent Shmu'el Tal.

Prime Minister Rabin last night severely criticized the acts of the three Likud activists in the United States, saying they might encourage U.S. isolationism and cause serious damage in the long run.

Likud Knesset Member Dan Meridor also expressed his reservations over the activity by his movement members in Congress. He said that this issue should be debated at home and not abroad.

Activist Writes Open Letter to Senator Helms

TA1711142194 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (24 SHA'OT supplement) in Hebrew 17 Nov 94 p 3

[Open letter by Elyaqim Ha'etzni: "The Gospel According to Jesse Helms"]

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[FBIS Translated Text] Distinguished Senator: Official circles in my country received the news of your imminent appointment as chairman of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee with anxiety and concern. A large Jewish public in this country, however, congratulates you on your victory and on the triumph of your political line.

Your widely reported observation that Syria does not want peace, that all it wants is the Golan and American money, and that the United States should not funnel funds to finance the Middle East "peace process" were very refreshing news from an America that is not naive, that refuses to allow local dictators and demagogues "to play it for a sucker."

We love America and the Americans, because the many things we share have forged a link between our two nations. It is for this precise reason that we would hate to see the U.S. Army on the Golan. We earned our honor and our standing when, in June 1967, our Defense Minister Moshe Dayan made his famous pronouncement that we do not want American boys to give their lives for us. And we do believe that a country that leaves its security in the hands of an alien country, no matter how friendly, is in trouble. If U.S. soldiers are hurt on the Golan, God forbid, our adversaries will no doubt assert with malice that the Jews are no longer draining you of only your money but also your blood. Inviting such an allegation would be bad for relations between our two nations.

The "peace process" is supposed to devour a great deal of American money. Syria, which has been inundating the United States with heroin, will not relinquish this source of income without some heavy American bribe (after which it will proceed to cultivate poppy in al-Biqa', occupied by it). In addition, Syria will demand financial "compensation" for its generous consent to sign one paper with the much-hated "Zionist enemy." This paper will be devoid of any value whatsoever, while your money is quite valuable indeed.

Israel will not give the Golan away "for free," either. The U.S. garrison force will cost a lot of money, a great deal of money will be required for the various electronic "Golan substitutes" (which are bound to be found hazardous to our health), and the main thing is that enormous sums will be needed to finance the uprooting of dozens of settlements and the turning of 13,000 Jews into refugees. These restitution funds are liable to amount to billions, because we are dealing here with sophisticated industries, a flourishing agriculture, a tourism infrastructure, an internationally renowned winery.

And what consequences can we expect, distinguished Senator? America will take from its poor, but it will get no gratitude in return. It will generate extreme animosity among more than half of the Israeli population for having financed the Golan's ruin.

Great efforts are being invested day and night—mainly by our government—in an attempt to exonerate 'Arafat. As of now, they should also seek to exonerate and finance Abu-Hitler as well. Yes, Abu-Hitler. 'Arafat has his own unit of bodyguards who constitute the hard terrorist core of Fatah. It is called Force 17. Several days ago, 'Arafat greeted a Force 17 parade with an inflammatory speech in which he promised "to liberate Palestine by spirit and blood." And who marched at the head of this parade? The commander of Force 17, who calls himself "Abu-Hitler." And you are being asked to finance this Arab "Abu-Hitler" for the sake of "peace." Yet "peace" also featured in every speech of the German Hitler as he was conquering Europe in the framework of "territories for peace."

We, therefore, welcome your stand against financing Arab Hitlers and your efforts to save us confrontation and friction with your Army, as we would like our friendship to last forever.

Officials Oppose Debt Write-Off, U.S. Aid Cut

TA1611180694 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 16 Nov 94 p A3

[Report by Judy Maltz]

[FBIS Translated Text] The heads of the Finance Ministry oppose the idea of writing-off Israel's debts in exchange for a cut in U.S. aid. Finance Minister Avraham Shohat yesterday said: "I assume the United States will not reduce the aid level." Shohat added, however, that hypothetically speaking a reduction in the aid level could force the government to impose more taxes on the public or reduce the level of public services.

During a tour to Holon and Giv'atayim, Shohat said: "We are investing a lot of our own resources in the peace process. The entire process of redeployment and providing additional security will cost billions of shekels. I therefore assume that the United States will not decrease its aid during the coming years."

Bank of Israel Governor Ya'aqov Frenkel yesterday warned that a cut in the aid could have an adverse effect on the growth process in Israel. Addressing an AIPAC [American Israel Public Affairs Committee] delegation headed by California Senator Barbara Boxer, Frenkel emphasized Israel is in the midst of a very special period in which our economy is shouldering a burden resulting from the need to bolster the peace process while safeguarding our security and pursuing our economic expansion, fighting unemployment, and absorbing immigration.

According to Frenkel, the U.S. aid at this 8onomic developments, Israel's use of the U.S. guarantees, and the latter's positive effect on Israel's economy and the economic aspects of the peace process.

Senior Finance Ministry officials yesterday expressed optimism and assessed that the U.S. Administration will

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not cut aid to Israel, at least not for the next two years—before the U.S. Presidential elections. The officials assess that if and when such a cut is made, it will be gradually implemented rather than at one fell swoop.

The officials also ruled out of hand the possibility that the United States will write off Israel's debts in exchange for a cut in the aid. They say that a debt write-off could harm Israel's image in international financial markets and create the mistaken impression that it is insolvent.

According to figures updated for August 1994, Israel's debts amount to $21.3 billion. Israel's direct debt to the United States amounts to $3.5 billion. In 1988 Israel converted a large part of its direct debts to bonds sold to the U.S. public.

Israel's debts to the U.S. private sector amounts to $8 billion, of which $5 billion are in the form of bonds issued in 1988 and another $3 billion in bonds issued in the last two years on the basis of the U.S. guarantees.

In addition, Israel owes $4.4. billion to foreigners who purchased Israel Bonds. The amount of debts that can be written-off, according to the aforementioned proposal, is relatively small, only $3.5 billion.

Peres: 'Arafat Must Control 'Own Mouth,' Guns

TA1811083494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres last night lashed out at the recent remarks by Yasir 'Arafat, calling on him to seize control over the weapons issue. The foreign minister last night addressed the conference of the Movement for Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem. Our correspondent Ya'el Ben-Yehuda reports:

[Begin recording] [Ben-Yehuda] Speaking before the Movement for Progressive Judaism, the foreign minister elaborated on Israel's relations with the Palestinian Authority [PA], and viewed the difficulties the peace process encounters, going into details of the mutual commitments the parties have made. We are handing them powers gradually, he said, and we have expectations from them as well. They are entitled to having diverse opinions, but not several police forces or armies.

[Peres] If 'Arafat and the PA fail to understand this, they will lose control. Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] may be fighting us, but it poses a danger to them in terms of the authority required to conduct daily affairs and in terms of the need to revive the economy in Gaza. We certainly expect the PA to be unequivocal on both these issues. It will either seize control over all the weapons and all the gun owners in the Gaza Strip, or it will collapse due to lack of authority and power, not because of us. It will not be able to provide the residents of the Gaza Strip, the Jewish settlements, or the Israelis in its midst, with security.

[Ben-Yehuda] As for the recent remarks by 'Arafat, Minister Peres regards them as harmful to peace.

[Peres] I believe that 'Arafat's remarks over the past several days are harmful to the peace process and to 'Arafat himself. I have the impression that 'Arafat has somewhat lost control over his own mouth. This is very grave, especially since we want to make progress in the peace process.

[Ben-Yehuda] Referring to the negotiating process with Syria, Peres said that currently it only has wings, but no feet. The atmosphere has improved, but no real progress has been made.

As for his vision, which does not seem too far off, Shim'on Peres plans a regional conference on education issues, and expresses the hope that by the end of next year, Israel will have established relations with 10 Muslim countries.

Rabin Allows 4,500 Palestinian Laborers Entry

TA1811112194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Yitzhaq Rabin, prime minister and defense minister, has authorized the entry to Israel of another 4,500 laborers from the territories to work in farms. Half would come from Gaza and the other half from Judaea and Samaria.

Our correspondent notes that, in total, some 8,000 Palestinian laborers and 8,000 foreign laborers will be working in farms in Israel. They will mainly work in the fields of citrus, vegetables, and flowers.

Islamic Leader: Shin Bet Searched Jerusalem Offices

TA1711140294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Shaykh Hasan Tahbub, chairman of the Higher Islamic Council in East Jerusalem, says that Israeli Shin Bet personnel came to the council's offices this morning to determine whether any Palestinian activity is being conducted there. Shaykh Tahbub, who was appointed by the Palestinian Authority to head the waqf, told our correspondent that he conducts his political activity out of his Gaza office.

The Jerusalem police spokesman told our correspondent that policemen went to the council offices solely to summon the son of one of the waqf guard for interrogation.

Al-Rujub, Shahal on Reported Jerusalem Office

TA1811061994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Aviv Bushinsky has learned that members of Jibril al-Rujub's

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Palestinian security service have an office in East Jerusalem from which they run their activities. Among other things, they settle conflicts and disputes among the Arab residents of East Jerusalem. The al-Rujub center operates under the name of Club for Prisoners, located next to Orient House in East Jerusalem.

Our correspondent also learned that Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], the rejectionist organizations, and Fatah have set up mediation and reconciliation committees in East Jerusalem.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0505 GMT on 18 November carries several related items. In a similar recorded report, correspondent Aviv Bushinsky cites one of the al-Rujub Jerusalem office activists as saying "if Israel's Police Minister Shahal closes down the office, the intifadah will return to Jerusalem."

[In a recorded telephone interview from Jericho by Yoni Ben-Menahem, Jibril al-Rujub says: "It is not true. We have an agreement, and we will deal with the issue of East Jerusalem in the last stage. Neither me nor any of my men intend to push your government into a corner."

[Speaking in a live telephone interview from his car, Police Minister Shahal comments by saying that "mediation is common Muslim practice." He adds: "We do not want and will not start to deal with this issue every morning. I have a comprehensive list of some 27 offices set up in Jerusalem—whether by placing a plaque or by renting office space. We presented a bill to the Knesset that passed the first reading. I say here, unequivocally: Once we have these tools at our disposal, we will sort out the offices in a way that will see to it that Palestinian governing bodies do not operate in Jerusalem."]

Reexamination of Palestinian Security Services Urged

TA1711091194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian security services are being trained, with Israel's agreement, by intelligence bodies in foreign countries in order to improve their operational level. Israeli sources now say that support for these organizations should be reviewed in light of the upsurge in Islamic terrorism and the hostile statements recently made by Palestinian security personnel. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Ben-Menahem] Even as the political and media furor around Jibril al-Rujub's security course continues, Israeli sources asserted that the entire issue of the Palestinian security services should be reexamined. It has been learned that with the agreement of the Israeli Government and the Shin Bet, the Palestinian security services are training with foreign security organizations in order to improve their operational capabilities.

The members of Jibril al-Rujub's and Muhammad Dahlan's preventive security service in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip have been training in Egypt with the Egyptian security service. Al-Rujub's men have already completed three courses in Egypt to study detention and interrogation techniques as well as VIP protection. Some of the graduates of these courses are posted in East Jerusalem.

Amin al-Hindi, the head of the Palestinian Authority's general security service, maintains extensive contacts with the CIA and with the French security service. Al-Hindi's men train in France and undergo courses in eavesdropping and VIP protection. The CIA has recently supplied al-Hindi's outfit with technical intelligence equipment and eavesdropping apparatus. Amin al-Hindi and Dahlan have good working relations with the Israeli Shin Bet and they regularly meet with the acting head of the Shin Bet. The Palestinian security services do not cooperate with the Jordanian security services and regard them as a dangerous competitor for control of the territories which must be fought ruthlessly. In light of the anti-Israeli speeches recently made by Palestinian security personnel, and their lack of success in the war against Islamic terrorism, Israeli sources are now asking whether it is wise to strengthen the Palestinian security services.

Some Palestinian Contacts With Diplomats Forbidden

TA1611143694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 16 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says Israeli diplomats are forbidden from holding contacts with Palestinian officials in countries which recognize the existence of a Palestinian state. The deputy foreign minister was responding in the Knesset to a question on the invitation by the Polish Government to Yasir 'Arafat to attend ceremonies marking the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. David Ze'ev reports:

[Ze'ev] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says there are over 80 countries which recognize the existence of a Palestinian state and where the Palestinians are represented through an embassy. In those countries, Beilin says, Israeli diplomats are prohibited from holding contacts with Palestinian embassy officials. In countries where there is no recognition of a Palestinian state, he said, there is nothing to prevent Israeli-Palestinian contacts.

The issue came up during a question from Labor Knesset Member Avigdor Qahalani, who raised the issue of the status granted to Yasir 'Arafat in the Polish invitation for the planned ceremony at Auschwitz. Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin said he understood 'Arafat was being invited as one of the recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. But Beilin said it would be a mistake for Israel to tell an Arab leader not to visit Auschwitz. Denial of the Holocaust, Beilin pointed out, is widespread and in many countries in the Arab world, including Egypt, the

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screening of the movie Schindler's List was prohibited. The deputy foreign minister said that in the Arab world coming to grips with the Holocaust represents an indirect acknowledgement of the Jewish right to be in Israel. Therefore, an 'Arafat visit—for an example—to Auschwitz would be very important.

Holocaust survivor Likud Knesset Member Dov Shilansky countered, however, that 'Arafat will go to Auschwitz to learn from his teacher how to do it.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1100 GMT on 16 November adds: "Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says the utterances of Jibril al-Rujub's men in favor of continuing the armed struggle for Jerusalem, Haifa, and Bet She'an are very grave. They are an instigation and constitute a gross violation of the Israeli-PLO agreements.

["Our correspondent Hayim Hecht reports that replying to queries at the Knesset, Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin said that these things will be taken care of at once in the framework of the Israeli-PLO coordination mechanisms."]

Settlers To Thwart Evacuation With 'Rings of Fire'

TA1611162894 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 16 Nov 94 p 13

[Report by Itamar Eichner]

[FBIS Translated Text] Minefields around settlements, people barricaded in houses, and an emergency radio network on Channel 7 [the settlers' offshore radio station] are part of the contingency plans being formulated by the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip in preparation for possible evacuations of settlements.

Settler officials yesterday continued marathon debates on the matter. Their goal is to decide on an official and clear-cut plan resembling a military operation.

The struggle will be waged on two levels. The inner circle (the hard core) will number hundreds of settlers who will barricade themselves in houses the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will attempt to evacuate. The settlers will chain themselves to houses. Some participants proposed that the settlers barricade themselves in houses filled with fresh cement. The roads to the settlements will be blocked with rocks, concrete, and the shells of heavy vehicles. According to one proposal, some settlements will be surrounded by minefields or rings of fire.

The outer circle will include thousands of people who will form a human belt around specific settlements and prevent all access. Their job will be to physically block the progress of soldiers and bulldozers. In order to make things more difficult for the army, crowds will be instructed to invade Arab houses in the area and barricade themselves inside. Another plan, which deals with the possible evacuation of the Jewish settlement in Hebron, calls for invading Arab homes throughout the town. A council official said yesterday that "instead of evacuating the Jewish settlement in Hebron, the army will have to first evacuate thousands of settlers from downtown Hebron."

Another major issue discussed by the settler leaders is how to mobilize the masses in order to foil the evacuation process. Call-up lists have been prepared and will be distributed to regional headquarters. Each director of a regional headquarters will recruit hundreds of activists from around the country who will await instructions—just like in the army. According to one of the proposals, the call-up network will be run by Channel 7. At the same time, a car pool network will be set up.

The plans expressly stipulate that any attempt to evacuate settlers will not encounter passive resistance, although the council explicitly prohibits any bloodshed among Jews. Shooting at soldiers is forbidden under any circumstances. Nevertheless, the settlers will employ psychological warfare against the soldiers. Among other measures, the settlers will hand the soldiers leaflets containing halakhic rulings by rabbis exhorting the troops to disobey evacuation orders.

Uri Ari'el, the council's chairman, said yesterday: "We have learned the lessons of Yamit [Sinai Peninsula settlement evacuated in 1982] and we will implement them if, God forbid, an attempt is made to transfer Jews out of Judaea and Samaria. Our red line is bloodshed. In my assessment, this struggle will drive some individuals to suicide."

Nisan Slomiansky, chairman of the Elqana council and director of the operational command behind these plans, told MA'ARIV yesterday: "This government is in for a surprise. Yamit will not fall again. This time soldiers will have to confront thousands of people who will physically prevent any evacuation. Over the past few days I have been contacted by right-wing activists around the country who want to join this struggle. There are people who sleep with their guns under the mattresses and are prepared to go much farther than us. It really scares me. I am afraid that some people's patriotism may know no limits."

Islamic Movement Intensifies Activity in Bedouin Sector

TA1711183594 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Islamic Movement has recently intensified its activity in the Israeli Bedouin sector. Leaflets denouncing Bedouin enlistment in the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] were distributed recently in the Bedouin town of Rahat. The town mayor says only a fringe minority is behind these things. [passage omitted]

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We have been told by a police spokesman that if an official complaint against Jum'a al-Qasasi, the man behind the leaflets, is lodged, the police will check whether his actions constitute a criminal offense.

Knesset Committee Briefed on PA-Hamas Relations

TA1711154294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The coordinator of activities in the territories says Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] may try to take over the civilian institutions in the territories, while the Palestinian Authority [PA], although aware of this possibility, is doing almost nothing against Hamas. According to Major General Dani Rothschild, the Palestinian security service's activity is almost tantamount to a violation of the agreement with Israel, and the latter is entitled to react by imposing sanctions.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that Maj. Gen. Rothschild told the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that he believes Hamas will participate in the elections in the territories. Israel will have to make difficult decisions regarding the election issue because of the difference between its approach and that of the PA. Israel's approach has not changed, and it continues to oppose anyone who calls for its destruction and advocates terrorism and racism.

Hamas Note Found on Murdered Woman's Body

TA1811082994 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0808 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The body of an 82-year-old woman was found a short while ago in a citrus grove in the Hadarim neighborhood of Kefar Sava. A note found on the body was signed by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], and police believe the woman was murdered for nationalistic reasons. Our correspondent Hadas Steiff is on the phone with the initial details:

Hadarim neighborhood in Kefar Sava borders on Qalqilyah. Less than an hour ago, a man found his 82-year-old mother dead in a citrus grove, with blood stains leading to the body. A note was found on the body that was signed by Hamas. The man immediately called the police, and very large forces are coming to the site at this time to investigate the circumstances of the murder. Initial suspicion is that the murder was committed for nationalistic reasons due to the note that was found on the body.

High Court Rejects Appeal by Family of 'Terrorist'

TA1711113494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A special panel of five judges from the High Court of Justice rejected by majority ruling an appeal submitted by the family of the terrorist who carried out the no. 5 bus attack in Tel Aviv [on 19 October] against the demolition of their house .

Four of the five justices ruled that there was no room to intervene in the considerations of the military commander who decided to destroy the house, as long as the commander exercised his authority with the appropriate degree of prudence and caution. The military commander was entitled to destroy the house as an emergency measure to maintain security.

Our legal affairs correspondent Mira Amsalem reports that in a minority opinion, Justice Misha'el Heshin said that only the terrorist's room, and not the entire house, should be destroyed.

There were conflicting reactions among opposition Knesset members [MK's] to the High Court of Justice ruling on the destruction of the house belonging to the terrorist's family. Likud MK Tzahi Hanegbi said that merely destroying the house would not have enough of a deterrent effect on suicide terrorists.

Our correspondent Hayimmet MK Moshe Peled is opposed to destroying the houses of terrorists' relatives. Peled asserted that this would be punishing innocent people and would only increase their hostility toward Israel.

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Al-'Anani Previews Talks With Israeli Delegation

JN1711145894 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, arrived in Amman today leading a diplomatic and economic delegation. Talks dealt with the implementation of clauses in the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty regarding economics and the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two sides.

Talks between the Jordanian side, led by Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of information and minister of state for cabinet affairs, and the Israeli side, led by Mr. Uri Savir, will deal with the implementation of the economic clauses of the treaty. A meeting will be held later today to discuss issues related to the establishment of diplomatic ties and arrangements for the establishment of embassies.

Dr. al-'Anani spoke to our correspondent Khalil al-Qaryuti:

[Begin al-'Anani recording] It was agreed in principle to hold this meeting when His Majesty King Husayn met with Israel's prime minister in Tiberias after exchanging the ratified copies of the treaty. It was agreed to hold regular joint meetings for the implementation of the treaty clauses. Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, has come to discuss issues related to the economic clauses in the treaty, so we can agree on starting talks on them and then sign agreements.

The other point is that there are common issues between the two sides regarding the multilateral issues that were agreed upon, especially in light of the results of the Casablanca conference. As you know, the Amman conference will be held in the spring of next year, at the end of May, and the beginning of June. We want this conference to be successful. We want it to be confined to feasible projects. Agreement must be reached on policies that will organize the economic relations between the two countries. This meeting is mainly organizational and it is intended to agree on the course of future action.

The other mission of the delegation is related to the Jordanian Foreign Ministry. There will be a meeting with the minister of state for foreign affairs to discuss the issues related to the establishment of an Israeli embassy, and to agree on the mission and the number of its personnel, and all other issues related to that clause in the treaty that provides for the establishment of embassies for the two countries in Amman and Tel Aviv. According to the treaty clauses, embassies between the two countries should be established within a month of the exchange of the ratified documents. [end recording]

'First Official Meetings' With Israelis Begin

Establishment of Ties To Be Announced

JN1811085294 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 18 Nov 94 pp 1, 27

[Report by Caroline Faraj]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Jordanian and Israeli delegations agreed in their first official meetings, which were held in Amman yesterday, to officially announce the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries on 27 November. This will be a prelude to the opening of embassies and the assigning of diplomatic staff on 10 December.

The two sides also agreed, during the preparatory economic meetings yesterday, to form a joint steering committee to follow up on issues related to the Jordan Valley Rift development project. Both sides agreed to form two other committees: One will be responsible for financing this project and the other will be responsible for the technical matters related to this and other projects.

This was announced during the economic meetings, which were held yesterday morning at the Royal Scientific Society under the chairmanship of Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, president of the Society and head of the Jordanian delegation, and Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs and information minister, attended part of these meetings.

In a statement to reporters, Dr. al-'Anani said that Jordan's stand is very clear. He said: We, as a state, respect ourselves, laws, and agreements. We call on everyone to abide by the law. There will be no lenience in this matter. Asked about the size of opposition and threats, Dr. al-'Anani said: What His Majesty King Husayn said is clear: Jordan decided to hold negotiations and to accept the peace treaty which passed through the constitutional and democratic stages, therefore, the minority should respect the opinion of the majority.

Al-'Anani said that what is now required, since, after three years of talks a treaty has been endorsed, is to launch the stage of implementation, in accordance with the provisions of the treaty itself. He noted that more meetings will be held between the two sides to follow up on the articles of the treaty. [passage omitted]

[Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic on 18 November, in its front-page report on Savir's meetings with the Jordanian officials in Amman, cites Nayif al-Hadid, secretary general of the Jordanian Foreign Ministry as saying that: "an announcement on the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jordan and Israel will be made on 27 November."]

Embassies Set To Open 10 Dec

TA1711170294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1600 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel and Jordan will open embassies in each other's country on 10 December. This was announced in Amman today during bilateral talks on carrying out the peace treaty.

Most of the discussions were devoted to economic matters, particularly a plan to develop the Jordan River basin. It was decided to set up a steering committee and two subcommittees.

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Israel's Savir on Exchange of Embassies

JN1711210494 Amman Jordan Television Network in English 2000 GMT 17 Nov 94

[From the "News at Ten" program]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Sat'an al-Hasan held talks with the Director General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry Uri Savir. The talks centered on the establishment of diplomatic relations as stipulated by Article 5 of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty. The two sides agreed that a Jordan delegation will visit Israel soon to find a suitable embassy site and residence for the diplomatic staff. Foreign Ministry secretary General Nayif al-Hadid said an Israeli team would visit Jordan next month to find a suitable site for their embassy in Amman. Uri Savir expressed satisfaction at the talks.

[Begin Savir recording] We had a very good and friendly meeting. We discussed the implementation of our agreement in the context of establishing diplomatic relations. We decided that both countries will issue later on this month a formal declaration in both capitals and that we will work also on technical levels and exchanging delegations in order to make sure that all the preparatory work is done so we can establish the embassies as was agreed upon and start to regularize and normalize our relationship. [passage omitted][end recording]

Talks Conclude

JN1711180694 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Talks between the Jordanian side, led by Nayif al-Hadid, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, and the Israeli side, led by Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, concluded at the Foreign Ministry a short time ago. Al-Hadid spoke to our correspondent Muhammad al-Hajaya:

[Begin recording] [al-Hadid] Based on Article 5 of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty, it has been agreed that a Jordanian Foreign Ministry delegation will be sent [to Israel] to choose sites for the Jordanian embassy and the places of residence of the Jordanian diplomats. We discussed the issue of the Israeli embassy and its staff. We will receive a delegate from the Israeli Foreign Ministry at the beginning of next month to choose a site for the Israeli embassy and diplomats. We also agreed to issue a joint statement after the Council of Ministers' approval of establishing diplomatic relations between Jordan and Israel.

[Hajaya] When will you officially announce the establishment of these relations?

[Al-Hadid] On 27 December. [end recording]

The Jordanian and Israeli sides held two working sessions at the Royal Scientific Society this afternoon and discussed economic issues. Dr. Jawad al-'Anani, minister of state for cabinet affairs, attended. Details are given by our correspondent Khalid al-Qaryuti:

[Begin recording] [al-Qaryuti] In statements to the press following the session, Dr. Jawad al-'Anani said: We are required to move to implement the peace treaty that was signed after three years of negotiations between Jordan and Israel. He added that the Jordanian side was ready to go anywhere both sides approve to complete discussions on bilateral issues, pointing out that His Majesty King Husayn went to Tiberias to exchange the documents and that Jordanian delegations and committees go to various places in Israel to follow the talks. Regarding the safety of Israeli tourists who intend to visit Jordan, he said: Our country respects itself and we respect our agreements. Everybody should observe the law. Jordan will not be tolerant in this matter. He then quoted His Majesty King Husayn as saying that Jordan has decided to accept the peace treaty, that the Jordanian parliament discussed the matter in a democratic way, that Jordan has reached a decision, and that the minority should accept the view of the majority in this regard.

The two sides also discussed during their two working sessions several economic subjects pertaining to trade, banks, free trade zones, investment, and preparations for the Amman economic conference scheduled to open in Amman in mid-June to draw up specific programs and projects approved by the regional working group committee stemming from the multilateral talks.

Dr. Hani al-Mulqi, head of the Jordanian side in the meetings spoke to reporters after the meeting.

[Al-Mulqi] Today, we discussed several issues. We agreed to form a follow-up committee for the Jordan Rift Valley project, in addition to two other committees. The first is in charge of financing the Jordan Rift Valley project as agreed on, in light of the joint terms of reference. The second committee is responsible for the financial issues and short-term [as heard] projects. We also discussed a timetable or a project to be presented to the EC to finance the building of dams. Economic feasibility studies will start at the end of this month.

[Al-Qaryuti] Uri Savir, director general of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, said that the projects discussed pertain to developing the Jordan Rift Valley, including all sectors that can take part such as the agricultural and touristic sectors, as well as joint projects between al-'Aqabah and Elat. He also pointed out that other meetings will be held next week. The current meeting was approved during His Majesty's recent meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin in Tiberias. We also agreed that there would be joint meetings to implement the provisions of the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty. Various Jordanian-Israeli committees also meet to implement the provisions of the treaty pertaining to the border, withdrawal, security, and water issues. Other topics, he added, will be discussed by Jordanian and Israeli committees. [end recording]

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Islamic Action Front Criticizes Ties With Israel

NC1811122494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1100 GMT 18 Nov 94

[Report by Muhammad Peshkar in Beirut—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. The Jordanian and Zionist governments have set 27 November, that is, nine days from now, as the date of the official announcement of the establishment of diplomatic relations between them. On 10 December the two embassies in Amman and Tel Aviv will open in implementation of the reconciliation agreement signed by the two sides on 26 October. This agreement was reached after prolonged meetings in Amman yesterday between a Zionist delegation headed by Uri Savir, who is the Foreign Ministry director general, and Jordanian officials.

The first reaction to setting the date for establishing diplomatic relations was rejection, expressed by the secretary general of the Islamic Action Front in Jordan, Dr. Ishaq Farhan, who said the step is rejected and falls within the framework of the collapse of Arab regimes before American and Zionist hegemony. In a telephone interview with him today he said the step has caused much sadness among the Jordanian people, who reject reconciliation with the enemies of God and who will continue to oppose normalization with the enemy until the end.

As for measures taken by the government to suppress opposition action in Jordan, the Islamic Action Front's secretary general said:

[Begin secretary general recording] There are numerous measures to stop the opposition voices being heard, whether in the media, or in demonstrations, processions, and other such activities. The responsible authorities are even trying to stop the internal media bulletins of our parties being published under the pretext that they are not licensed. Some of these parties are actually licensed and have the right to distribute such bulletins internally among their cadres at least, to alert them. But there is action among several opposition parties, unions, and independent national forces to rally a popular conference in a month's time at which some papers will be presented for action along with political statements and a general popular national charter on how to oppose normalization in the various sectors: educational, cultural, media, economic, and trade. We will be advising our people to be careful about the Zionist octopus, which is trying to turn Jordan into a gateway to the Arab and Islamic worlds and the Middle East, as they claim. [end recording]

Israeli Measures in Ibrahimi Mosque Denounced

JN1711133494 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 17 Nov 94 pp 1, 17

[Report by Tariq al-Mumani]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The House of Representatives issued a statement yesterday in which it denounced the measures taken by the Israeli authorities in the Ibrahimi Mosque and the attempts to divide it. The statement appeals to the Arabs and Muslims to bypass their differences, restore solidarity and coherence, and exert pressure on the Government of Israel to stop these measures and put an end to encroachments. The House called on the [Jordanian] Government to shoulder its responsibility in this regard. [passage omitted]

Ministry Says Attack on Newspaper Offices Attemped

JN1711103294 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible source at the Interior Ministry has said that at 0415 today, there was an attempted attack against the offices of the weekly newspaper, SHIHAN.

The source added that the competent security officials rushed to the newspaper's offices after hearing gunshots fired by the building's guard. They discovered two gas bottles, a detonator, and a battery. Security authorities are investigating the incident.

Islamic Front Shura Council Elects New Chairman

JN1711132794 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 17 Nov 94 p 3

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-RA'Y—The Shura Council of the Islamic Action Front has held its third session, during which it elected 'Adnan al-Majali as chairman of the Shura Council. Al- Majali succeeds 'Abd-al-Majid Dhunaybat, who resigned because he was elected controller general of the Muslim Brotherhood. Engineer Khadr Bani-Khalid was elected assistant to the chairman of the Shura Council. Bani-Khalid succeeds 'Abd-al-'Aziz Jabr.

The office of the Shura Council thus includes: 'Adnan al-Majali, chairman; Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Shuraydah, vice chairman; Eng. Khadr Bani-Khalid and Dr. Khalid al-Qudah, assistants to the chairman.

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Explosion Reported Near Amal Member's Home

NC1811094694 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0915 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] This morning an explosive charge went off on the road leading to the home of Fadl al-Musawi, official in charge of educational affairs in the Amal Movement, in the south near Arzun in the Tyre district. The explosion caused only material damage. According to security sources, the charge was approximately 1 kg of TNT. Investigations have begun to locate the culprits.

Islamic, Nationalist Groups Assail 'Zionist Plot'

LD1711213094 Tehran IRNA in English 2111 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, Nov. 17, IRNA—A number of Islamic and nationalist Palestinian and Lebanese groups in a meeting here Wednesday [16 November] night called on Muslim nations to intensify their campaign against the Zionist plan of constructing the Jewish settlements in the Muslim occupation lands.

Present at the meeting were Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Islamic Resistance Movement of Palestine [as received], Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], Islamic Jihad Movement of Palestine, Democratic Front for Liberation of Palestine, Hizballah movement, Unity Party and Lebanese Socialist Progressive Party.

The Palestinian and Lebanese groups in their statement released here Wednesday night said that partitioning of the shrine of prophet Abraham in al-Khalil [Hebron] is a preliminary step to establish a Jewish community there and for this reason Muslims should fully confront the Zionist plot.

Condemning the operation carried out by 'Arafat police in suppressing the Palestinian combatants, the Palestinian and Lebanese groups called for supporting the Palestinian intifadah and the resistance in southern Lebanon and also called on Muslim ummah to intensify their fight against the western and the Zionist plots.

Customs Service Fee on Syrian Vehicles Canceled

JN1711190894 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 1 Nov 94 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut—Yesterday, Lebanese Minister of State for Financial Affairs Fua'd al-Sanyurah issued a decision canceling the 1,000-pound service fee the Customs Department charges private Syrian tourist cars entering Lebanon.

'Isam Haydar, chairman of the Higher Council for Customs, issued a similar decision canceling the fee imposed on Syrian cars entering Lebanon. These two decisions will go into effect as of Tuesday, 1 November.

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Prime Minister Delivers Policy Statement

JN1511153094 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 14 Nov 94

[Government policy statement read by Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi before the People's Assembly in Damascus on 14 November—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] Mr. Speaker of the People's Assembly, ladies and gentlemen: I am pleased at the beginning of the sixth legislative term of your esteemed assembly to congratulate you—the speaker and members of the assembly—in my name and on behalf of the government, on the confidence of the people, having won the honor of representing it. You have won their confidence through elections that attracted the people's attention. This attention is, in itself, a natural reflection of the citizens' awareness of their political and social responsibilities. This is also evidence of their eagerness to make initiatives, contribute to all walks of life, assert their role, embody their participation, and exercise their rights and duties under a democratic system that includes all the sons of the people. Under this democratic system, the citizens enjoy the freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and the law. The citizens have thus expressed their will and ideas and worked for their ambitions and future.

The true picture of democracy in Syria has been manifested in the broad representation at the People's Assembly of the parties of the National Progressive Front and the independents, who represent a variety of intellectual and academic segments, in addition to economic figures, including industrialists and traders.

The days of the election activity witnessed a good turnout. Those days have had clear meanings. They reflected a growing level of awareness and fair competition to represent and serve the public and perform duties in a fair and free, calm and orderly atmosphere.

As we receive the sixth legislative term of the new People's Assembly, we extend our congratulations and express hope that the new assembly will achieve the aspirations of the country. We also would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the members of the former People's Assembly in the fifth legislative term, who made appreciable efforts and carried out their duties faithfully in the past legislative term. That term saw the promulgation of an important number of laws, recommendations, and measures, which are now an inseparable part of our legislative, administrative, economic, social, and cultural entity.

Cooperation between the legislative and executive branches achieved the desired results in the past period. We are confident that cooperation between your esteemed assembly and the government will help promote an efficient relationship between the legislative and executive branches and will integrate legislative and executive duties. This is because our common goal is to achieve the pressing objectives that require developing the legislative structure, implementing development plans, using better mechanism for administration, labor, and production, and serving and meeting the needs of citizens. This way all of us—government and assembly—will rise to the level of the confidence given to us by the people and the leader of the people, President Hafiz al-Asad.

From time to time and between one legislative term and another, we pause for a while to assess our achievements by the standards of today and yesterday, to see what was achieved and what was not. In our assessment, we do not overlook the circumstances and developments that have affected our march, as well as the upheavals in the region and the world. This is in addition to the great burdens imposed by the duty to defend the homeland, the people's gains, and the causes of the Arab nation.

Indeed, when we take all these factors into consideration, we find that Syria has made great achievements on the domestic, Arab, and international levels. This has been made in spite of adverse regional and international conditions. The achievements thus represent a far-reaching historic action that has deep significance. This has increased Syria's strength, development, and steadfastness. It has enabled it to meet the required pan-Arab need for an impenetrable Arab defense line, after many lines have been penetrated, and to meet the level of existing and coming challenges.

Syria, thanks to its strong economy, the cohesion and unity of its people, its steadfast positions, and firm leadership, has thwarted many schemes and proven wrong many hostile predictions. Thus, when political and economic upheavals shook many countries worldwide and consequently shook many economies and destabilized many regimes, the world was speaking favorably about the strength of our economy. The Syrian economy has weathered these upheavals. Syria was also in the lead of many countries in development accomplishments, financial and economic balance, cultural and academic expansion. Syria has achieved food sufficiency, increased commodity production, and met local demand. Syria has also succeeded in unleashing new and great potentials for the private sector in the field of investment, let alone the world's admiration of our political strategy that is governed by national principles and pan-Arab standards. Syria has won global respect. The Arabs had nearly lost this respect had it not been for Syria. At the same time, Syria braced for all possibilities, adhering to its responsibilities in the region and the Arab homeland. Syria has also been eager to perform its duties toward the international community.

Ladies and gentlemen: At every new legislative term and before each stage of action, our great leader, President Hafiz al-Asad, has been in the habit of outlining the objectives of the next stage and its major features and requirements. In his recent speech at the inauguration of the sixth legislative term of your esteemed assembly, he concisely outlined to us the substance of the political,

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economic, social, and cultural approach followed by Syria since 1970. He said: The special characteristics of each community are what eventually determine the course of its progress, in accordance with its realities, conditions, and resources. A right approach would outline clearly the present realities in order to move to a better situation. He also stressed that Syria has, through the relationship between thought and action, effected a movement that enabled it to understand and comprehend Arab and international realities. This approach has provided reassurance and safety to all sectors of the people, entrenched values, and enhanced achievements.

The government has adopted President al-Asad's speech to the People's Assembly as a guidebook. It will strive to turn its recommendations into practical programs and its headlines into administrative, financial, economic, and production policies. This speech offers a profound analysis of our political, economic, social, cultural, intellectual, and human realities. Therefore, the government has adopted it as a major criterion in assessing its work in the past stage and a primary guide for its work, programs, and policies in the future. The government has also depended on this speech as a theoretical and practical frame of reference for each official in his ministry, department, and institution. Further, the speech will serve as an approach that will deepen and expand integration among the three economic sectors, the private, public, and mixed. The speech states that the link between an advanced level of production and an advanced level of services is an indispensable need.

The purpose of this is to make the increase in production a means to increase services and to take the mechanism of administration and work to a stage that comprehends modern concepts and technologies and acquires methods that raise economic, administrative, and financial performance to a more modern and effective level. At the same time, there will be emphasis on constant attention to meeting the increasing needs of the masses and improving the standard of living of the citizens in all fields.

Economic control and accountability should play a pivotal role in correcting defects and mistakes, by punishing those who do not perform their jobs properly or who neglect their duties, in accordance with the law. On the other hand those who participate in the production process and show creativity should be rewarded as a matter of fairness. In addition, the systems of control and accountability should be provided with accurate formulas that enable the ministries, departments, and institutions to sort out those who work with dedication and participate in production, shoulder their responsibilities faithfully, and build their country, from those who do not work, do not contribute to production, do not dedicate themselves to work, who shirk their responsibilities, do not exercise their powers at their ministry, department, or institution, and thus do not contribute to the building of their country. It is in this serious spirit and this kind of responsibility that we will all engage in the next stage of action.

General Policy: Foreign and Domestic.

I. Foreign Policy:

The developments the world has witnessed over the past years have created new facts on the ground. The world—North and South, East and West—is today facing unprecedented challenges. The Cold War has left behind dozens of civil wars in many regions, claimed the lives of thousands, indeed millions, of people, and left dozens of millions of refugees and homeless people. In addition, a wave of poverty has hit around one-fifth of the world's population, including 90 percent of the sons of developing nations, who now live below the poverty line.

Despite these developments and despite the difficult and complicated regional and international conditions, Syria has managed, under the leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, to deal with the new realities and face the challenges with a great measure of wisdom and courage. Syria has adhered to its national and pan-Arab constants and continued to develop its own strength, by tapping its latent potential in the best way possible. Thus, Syria looks with confidence to the future, bearing in mind its hopes, ambitions, and higher values to achieve its objectives.

In light of the above, the foreign policy adopted by Syria on the Arab and international levels includes the following:

1. The Arab Level:

Syria, which believes in its Arab nation and which has always borne Arab burdens and championed Arab aspirations, shall continue to carry out its pan-Arab mission and work to achieve Arab solidarity in order to face the current situation of the Arab nation and reactivate its institutions. It shall also emphasize the need to adhere to Arab charters and decisions, because the continuation of the Arab situation, in its current form, is not in anyone's interest. This is because those who cannot guarantee their interests through those of the entire nation will not be able to do so separately.

Syria has made immense efforts to restore Arab solidarity and will continue to do so. It hopes that everyone will realize the size of the grave dangers and challenges facing the Arab nation. Syria shall continue to perform its pan-Arab duty by supporting fraternal Lebanon, which has managed to achieve national reconciliation and revive its constitutional institutions. Syria will also seek to bolster the Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination Treaty. This Treaty has laid solid foundations for close cooperation between the two fraternal countries in all fields. Thus, the relationship between the two countries now serves as a model to be emulated in the Arab arena. In his pan-Arab speech before this assembly, President Hafiz al-Asad lauded Lebanon's remarkable steadfastness and constant coordination with Syria. This is out of Lebanon's conviction that division brings weakness and unity achieves strength, that Syria's

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strength will strengthen Lebanon, and that a strong Lebanon, through its people and principles, will be a source of strength for Syria.

Syria has been engaged in the Arab conflict, against Israeli occupation, for a very long time. Its people have borne the major burden of the conflict and made immense human and material sacrifices in defense of land and dignity and in order to restore rights. Syria did not go to war or make sacrifices because it likes war. This was done in defense of right and dignity and to liberate the territory.

Syria wanted the Arab parties to go to the peace process while partaking of Syria's strength, because we know that, by all standards, separate negotiations will absolutely not be in the interest of the Arab party that holds such negotiations.

We were surprised firsst by the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and then by the Jordanian-Israeli agreement. We do not want to discuss what they reached, but developments unequivocally reveal the severe damage such unilateral action has caused to the very essence of the goals for which we have long fought and struggled. Syria wants a true peace and realizes that everyone has an interest in such peace. Syria has expressed its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace that is based on the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, as well as the land-for-peace principle. The achievement of peace in the region depends on Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, all of the occupied Syrian Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines, and southern Lebanon. Syria wants a just and comprehensive peace that restores the land and achieves security and stability, particularly since inequitable deals and agreements that do not guarantee rights can never constitute a factor of security and stability in the region. This fact has been acknowledged by the international community. Syria is the key to a just and comprehensive peace in the region. U.S. President Bill Clinton's visit and talks in Damascus with President Hafiz al-Asad have clearly confirmed this fact.

In the Islamic Field

Syria will continue to support the Islamic Conference Organization and bolster the relations of cooperation and friendship with the Islamic states in the various domains, particularly in their defense of the Muslim peoples' rights and in upholding their just causes. Syria played a role in activating this organization.

The Nonaligned Movement

Syria will continue to support this movement in order to unify the stands of its member states and bolster its efficiency in the international arena in a manner that serves the causes and interests of its peoples, particularly after the end of the cold war and the emergence of hotbeds of tension and civil war in many parts of the world. This requires more cooperation among the movement states in order to effectively contribute to drawing up the frameworks and pillars of the new world order and develop the work of the United Nations by making its institutions, particularly the Security Council, more democratic in serving the world nations' interests and achieving world peace and security.

In the International Field

Syria will strengthen its relations with the Russian Federation, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the East European states in the various fields. It will also continue to enhance the relations of friendship and cooperation with the People's Republic of China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Syria is also keen on developing its relations of cooperation with Japan and the southeast Asian states. Proceeding from the mutual influence of the security of the two regions—the Arab and European regions—and the reciprocal interests, Syria will develop and expand its relations with the European states within the framework of bilateral relations and relations with the European Union for the sake of achieving the common interests on the basis of equality and mutual respect. Accordingly, Syria welcomes the convocation of the cooperation council between Syria and the European Union at the end of this month. Syria will also develop its relations with the North and South American states and nations, as well as the African states. It will also bolster ties with Arab communities in these states. Syria will continue its effective role in supporting the United Nations and bolstering democracy within its structures in a manner that achieves the unity of their criteria and boost the implementation of the international legitimacy resolutions.

II. Domestic Policy: Drawing up domestic policy, while providing the elements that ensure a sound domestic front, requires an integrated vision of society. This vision should strike a balance between society's economic development and its social, cultural, and technical progress. There should also be a balance between society's legislative and administrative foundations and security foundations. In line with the above, there should be concordance among the economic structure, social realities, and cultural level, in a manner that responds to the factors that govern the development of relations existing between the state institutions and the citizens.

Any sound approach always seeks to closely link economic and social achievements to the securement of direct services to the public in terms of housing, work, clothing, and food, as well as the securement of their ever-increasing needs in the field of education, health, and labor, not to mention their need for electricity, telephones, drinking water, transportation, supplies, and communications.

Development, which in the fields of agriculture and industry seeks to set up projects which form the productive infrastructure of the national economy, is usually

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measured by the increase in the values of gross national production and the values of the gross national product. Such a development certainly brings about social transformation and cultural and scientific advancement, and provides collective and individual services. Such a positive balance between the production and services sectors decides where progress is achieved and realizes the required civilization level of any country.

In accordance with this concept, the government's domestic policy will be based on the following objectives:

1. The pursuit of steps to achieve the objectives of comprehensive economic and social development. As known, development and the issues pertaining to it and its challenges deal with the individual, resources, and the institutions. There has been real interaction among these factors in the past and present, and will continue in the future. In accordance with this comprehensive concept, development is a continuous operation. If it stops, then the situation of the country will retrogress when compared with what it needs and with the other countries. Development also does not mean that any country's problems and issues will be definitely settled. When solutions are found for today's problems and issues, new problems and issues will surface that were not as acutely sensed in the past.

In our contemporary world, any country's problems and issues do not result from what takes place in the process of its progress and the growth of its economic importance. Part of these problems and issues are the reflection of what takes place in other countries.

From this premise, development means and methods should be placed within the context of a dynamic and creative future while benefiting from the past and present experience. The methods and means of development in the future will be different than those used in the past, or those that are being used today. In short, comprehensive economic and social development is an integrated cultural development venture with continued production and creativity as its beating heart. Within the framework of this concept, and through the dimensions of comprehensive economic and social development, the tackling of issues should also be comprehensive and should take place with complete coordination on the level of the entire economy and at a time that is in line with the size of the required changes.

That's why the government's economic policy, its measures and decisions in this field have tackled and will tackle all aspects, activities, and sectors and with wise, scientific, and rewarding steps seek to achieve the best results and avoid the unwanted repercussions whenever possible. From this premise, the government's efforts in the field of development will continue to focus on native resources, and on discovering latent resources, exploiting national and natural resources, adopting scientific planning in investment, achieving ever-increasing growth rates in the fields of agriculture and intermediate and extraction industries, providing the required services, and enhancing integration among the three sectors; the public sector, the private sector, and the mixed sector. The government will also encourage the private sector in the field of investments of national capital, expand the scope of investment, invigorate the solid relationship between economic and social development and the newly-established patterns of social changes as a road that will lead to building the inherent strength and responding to the individual and collective ambitions of all the sons of the Syrian people.

2. The modernization of laws is a national necessity, as his excellency the president has said. Despite the fact that a significant number of laws on various issues has been updated, it is clear that the modernization of laws to reflect economic and social changes, as well as the outcome of such an endeavor in terms of enhanced ties require this updating of legislation. This issue cannot be overlooked. Legislation must address all these issues. If developments on the ground grow beyond the confines of the laws in force, this could cause confusion and bring about flaws in the work of corporations. This could also result in the incompatibility of the economic and social state of affairs with the legislative situation. Hence, the government is underscoring the modernization of legislation, laws, and regulations, and placing greater emphasis on this. The legislation whose rationale is nonexistent at present must be revoked. As for flawed legislation, it must be amended; and the necessary legislation must be enacted.

That is, the overall development must be matched by proper legislation so that laws and regulations may reflect this development and its manifestations on the ground. The government will seek to update the state's work mechanisms, and continue, with greater resolve, its effort to combat the legacy of bureaucracy and red tape. Administrative development has acquired added significance, given its ability to bring about key changes toward that end by using the techniques and concepts enshrined in the science of administration, which promotes the modernization of organizational formulas, the expansion of the areas in which personnel can be rehabilitated and trained, and the detailed identification of administrative and production assignments.

Among other things, the government seeks to modernize the archiving and documentation systems at the Prime Ministry and all state departments and institutions. Similarly, it is attempting to use microfilms, microfiches, and computers, and to involve employees in the organization and management courses held by the Arab Organization for Administrative Development in order to improve the output of administrative training programs. It will also seek to involve employees in the conferences and seminars held by the organization to promote administrative systems and methods and introduce modern techniques on the largest possible scale.

3. The government will follow up on the modernization of local administration in terms of councils and units in

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the governorates to promote the concept of decentralization and place all local powers in the hands of the people so that they may contribute toward making the decisions that are related to their cities, towns, and villages; resolving their problems; and realizing their aspirations. It will also endeavor to promote the role being played by popular organizations and professional associations, and foster the popular democratic system, which is grounded in political and economic pluralism.

4. Scientific research is a big topic in this age, in which discoveries are being made at a rapid pace, in which information is being unceasingly produced, and in which technologies are competing. Budgets are being earmarked to promote scientific research. The tools that could be used by scientists, inventors, researchers, and creative people are being developed. This could help nurture and promote their contributions. Moreover, we should not underestimate the efforts under way to attract minds, scientists, and researchers wherever they are; to remove the obstacles that stand in their way; to make available the necessary funds and resources; and to forge stronger ties with scientific centers in the world through fellowships or participation. Nonetheless, creating the proper conditions for attracting national expertise, superior minds, and productive talents in the society and preserving this pool of talent properly is equally important. Scientific research requires equipment, the creation of organizations, resources, and fellowships. It also requires the creation of a purely scientific climate that attracts scientists, inventors, and researchers who are willing to give their undivided attention to the pursuit of truth in order to identify solutions to the problems that they might face.

President Hafiz al-Asad has always concentrated, as he did in his latest speech before this assembly, on scientific research so that it will receive the attention it deserves from all concerned quarters. He emphasized that regardless of the efforts made, there should be more efforts, and that attention should be given to time that is lost and that is difficult to compensate. If we do not adhere to scientific research and go deep in this field, we will not achieve the progress for which we aspire or protect our achievements, which we realized by the sweat and sacrifices of our people.

On the basis of this tendency, which the government considers basic and important, we will make scientific research a distinguished banner of action for the next stage. This will be accompanied by all necessary efforts, capabilities, and continuous follow up.

5. Technical and Vocational Education: Implementation of the technical and vocational education plan began in the academic year 1988-1989. Since then, technical and vocational schools have been set up, books have been provided, curricula have been worked out, and equipment necessary for vocational training has been made available. Professions were defined in accordance with the requirements of economic, agricultural, industrial, and services development in general, and according to the requirements of each governorate in particular.

The implementation of the technical and vocational education is supervised by a standing ministerial committee at the Prime Ministry. Technical and vocational education—its schools, institutes, and graduates—constitute the main source of technical labor for production and services establishments in the three sectors—the public, private, and mixed sectors. Through concentrating on this tendency in education, specialized technicians required by the national economy can be secured, in addition to the fact that this education upgrades economic and production performance in general in the three sectors. Therefore, the government will continue to provide the technical schools and vocational institutes with their requirements. It will make a new and comprehensive study of their conditions in order to secure all requirements of teachers, laboratories, equipment, and aides, and to encourage students to continue their studies in these schools and institutes through all possible means.

6. Audit and Fiscal Control: Audit and fiscal control are basic means for state action, implementation of the law and for emphasizing the overall sovereignty of law, and for implementing the set plans through sound means that organize the work of every administrative establishment and realize all the objectives of every economic or production project. These activities cannot be controlled without supervision of work and workers and without accountability for work and results of that work. However, the real concept of audit and control is not restricted to punishing offenders, or those who make mistakes or are negligent, and rewarding the creative, productive, and honest ones. This is important, but it goes beyond this concept to what is more important so that audit and fiscal control become pillars for developing plans and methods and for modernizing legislation and systems so that the audit, scrutiny, and control establishments change from bodies that detect legal and administrative violations into an actual force of development, and become a sort of brain that controls, organizes, corrects, and avoids mistakes. It is also the delicate instrument that reveals reasons for defects that may be invisible in legislation, systems, and methods of work.

The government will strengthen this organ through material and human capabilities that will be competent and efficient and that have experience and awareness of the objectives of audit and fiscal control in order to develop these establishments and become active bodies in this field.

Audit, in the words of his excellency the president, is building, and whoever slackens in that area will be guilty of dereliction in duty of building of his country, and whoever works in earnest will be a constructive member of society. Seeing that the judicial body is a tool and vehicle of the law, the government will go on supporting,

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expanding, and strengthening the judicial system and consolidating the rule and sovereignty of law.

7. Keeping up the work in line with the approach followed by the government since 1989 in the agricultural area, which has led to the agricultural sector making a huge leap and put agriculture on top of our economic agenda, and thus cultivate all arable areas and double investments and diversify crops.

The past few years have seen an increase in productivity, with core crops registering record highs, and agricultural goods becoming the mainstay of the country's food security. Dams and water facilities were built and thousands of hectars reclaimed. The government will work to make sure that reclamation projects and water networks are completed on schedule and incorporated into investment plans. The government will call all negligent authorities to account if they fail to meet the deadline of these plans, since delays are bound to hurt the agricultural and economic sector considerably. We will discuss agriculture in greater detail when we address the economic sector.

8. The government will continue to keep track of the modernization of the public sector's establishments. This sector plays a key role in the national economy and is credited with forging a broad industrial base in the country and creating a solid infrastructure for the national economy including roads, bridges, railways, hospitals, electricity generating stations, wire and radio communications, drinking water projects, sewage networks, seaports and airports, and other facilities vital for domestic and foreign trade, in addition to dams and water networks and major reclamation projects.

The public sector, with its industrial, agricultural, commercial establishments and construction firms, represents the fundamental and service base, and counts as a major achievement of the state. The development of its systems and the right choice of its leaders and the suitability of its administrative and productive modes of performance with urgent economic requirements promote the performance of the general social and economic wellbeing of the country. The government has convened several meetings to promote that end and made numerous decisions, and your esteemed assembly issued Decree No. 3. The government is continuing to hold meetings to work out the ideal solutions so that that sector becomes even more effective and capable of coping with competition and carrying the economic and social burdens.

9. The government will continue to boost the productivity of the existing companies of the mixed sector. The government will work to create such conditions that will widen the circle of cooperation between the public and private sectors with a view to starting new firms in the agricultural, industrial, and service areas, especially in tourism. The government will also work to encourage Arab capital to set up companies in various areas.

10. Following the legislative Decree No. 10 in 1991, the private sector took off in a big way, with the projects that have been approved up to the third quarter of 1994 reaching 1,089 at an investment cost of 170 billion plus Syrian lira, including over 129 billion in foreign currency, which works out at 74 percent of the total investment, and which will create upwards of 75,000 jobs.

Those projects have greatly contributed toward providing domestic alternatives for many imported commodities. They have also contributed toward increasing exports and meeting consumer needs. They have enhanced the domestic market's potential for storage, refrigeration, classification, packaging for the various industries. Those projects have resolved domestic transportation shortage and secured transportation means for exports and imports by sea and land. The private sector's contribution in this regard is promising and opens the way for investment by Syrian expatriate, Arab, and foreign capital in Syria, which has become a model country in terms of political, economic, and social stability, which is a prerequisite for active and effective investment. The government will continue to support the cooperative sector because of its noticeable role in the various fields of agriculture, housing, and supply.

11. The Syrian women's role in public life has been enhanced. We take pride in women's growing participation. It will be among the government's objectives to continue developing women's role in all fields of work and production, assumption of responsibilities, and the exercise of political, economic, administrative, and cultural tasks. Syria is a distinguished country in freeing women of shackles, enhancing their potential, and consolidating their role in the society and in maintaining the entity of the family and bringing up a strong generation of men and women.

12. Strengthening the Armed Forces will remain the government's major objective. As President Hafiz al-Asad said: A strong people and a strong army support the nation's fair causes and elevate the homeland. Peace can only be achieved by a strong people.

In the Economic Field

The comprehensive economic and social development process in Syria has effected basic changes in the basic structure of the national economy and the nature of production relations. It has produced economic and social developments with positive results in terms of economic and social accomplishments on all levels. Time does not permit me now to review all Syria's development achievements. However, we can here point out some achievements, including:

1. The establishment of a broad and developed base of infrastructures for economic and social development. This took place through the building and maintenance of large number of roads, railways, ports, airports, and power and water networks with integrated irrigation, sewerage, and other networks.

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2. The expansion of the agricultural and industrial base of production, with a special emphasis on industries supporting economic development, such as chemical, engineering, and mineral industries. In addition, there has been a continued effort to exploit all Syria's natural resources, including natural gas, oil, and mineral wealth. Projects to exploit alternative and renewable energies will be initiated.

3. The implementation and development of auxiliary services projects, such as hotels, banks, and telephone and telex services.

4. The implementation of plenty of personal services projects in various parts of the country. This has resulted in a comprehensive expansion in the scope of services in the fields of education, culture, health, and transportation, as well as in the fields of providing drinking water and electricity for urban and rural areas. In addition to that, the Syrian Arab economy, especially in recent years, has witnessed noticeable development achievements in all fields. Those achievements have been reflected by some overall changes, such as, for example:

A. From 1990-93, the gross domestic product has increased by an average of 14.1 percent annually at current prices and 7.2 percent at constant prices

B. Syria's exports have increased significantly. During the period mentioned above, the exports increased at an average of 24.3 percent annually at current prices and 14.4 percent at constant prices. Imports have been earmarked to meet the basic needs, including production requirements, food supplies and medicines, and machinery and equipment for investment projects. Their annual growth rate amounted to 31.4 percent at current prices and 4.3 percent at constant prices during the same period.

C. Increased production and exports and developed imports have led to a tangible improvement in consumption with average consumption registering a rise of 16.4 percent per annum measured by current prices and 2.9 percent measured by fixed prices in the years 1990-1993. The average consumption of the population reached 16.9 percent per annum measured by current prices and 2.3 percent per annum measured by fixed prices.

As for the government consumption in relation to the state general budget, it scored an average growth rate of 14.3 percent measured by current prices and 5.7 percent measured by fixed prices during the same period.

D. Over the past few years, there has been a considerable amount of investment registering an average of 32.2 percent per annum measured by current prices and 11 percent measured by fixed prices. It goes without saying that these and other achievements were made possible by the government's economic policy following the instructions of His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. This policy was based on such firm foundations as follows:

1. Syria's is an agricultural and industrial economy that is relatively diversified in its basic structure, and has registered a marked development in the service sector, which explains the sensitivity of this economy to developments in the local, regional, and international arenas.

2. The population growth in Syria is comparatively high, which necessitates the creation of job opportunities and an increase in the pace of production all the time.

3. The economic and political structures in Syria are based on pluralism that affords every individual the opportunity to contribute, each according to his resources, to the economic and social development and bring him into the decisionmaking process.

4. Syria is known for its rich natural and agricultural resources and tourism potential, in addition to the reputed industriousness and skill of the Syrian individual. Add to that the fact that Syria is one of the most secure and stable countries in the region and beyond. Therefore, the government will work to cope with all the challenges and surmount all the obstacles that face most of the economies of the developing nations to promote the following aims:

A. Increased efforts to attract all resources and energies to the productive areas. This means the creation of new investment opportunites and opening the road to all energies and all sectors and economic units to make the most of these opportunities.

B. Emphasis on creating a climate conducive to attracting all investment possibilities in the production channels, and educating prospective investors as to the available incentives and guarantees.

C. Ongoing efforts to achieve a more efficient administration and consequently a better economic performance to arrive at a better distribution of the available ingredients of production and a more efficient use of capital and a revision of the performance of the public sector by taking the steps needed for its function in accordance with economic principles.

D. Emphasis on achieving a steady increase in economic growth rates and finishing projects that have been licensed in accordance with Investment Law No. 10, as well as projects that will be licensed in the future to take part in production in full capacity.

E. Ongoing efforts to enhance the major and rapid development in the agricultural sector, in its botanical and animal aspects, by means of horizontal and vertical expansion in this sector.

F. Ongoing efforts to develop industry, especially industry that depends primarily on agricultural products and industries that use raw materials which are available or can be made available locally.

G. Ongoing efforts to expand electricity services and improve the system of conduction and distribution.

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H. Ongoing efforts to modernize the communications system.

I. Priority will continue to be given to rural development as a basic need.

J. Emphasis on vocational and technical training, in accordance with the requirements of economic progress.

K. Completion of the necessary steps to restore balance to the national economy, for example, striking a balance between revenues and expenses as much as possible. This trend requires reforming and modernizing financial systems, tools, and agencies, in both revenues and expenses.

L. Balance between exports and imports. This requires more measures to encourage exports, by concentrating on increasing production, improving its qualities, and developing the means of marketing at home and abroad.

To attain these objectives, the government has drawn up policies and made decisions and measures for the future progress in all sectors, as follows:

1. Agriculture and Irrigation: Agricultural development is a major objective of the domestic policy outlined in this statement. Giving priority to developing the sector of agriculture and irrigation need not be restated, as it is an axiom. Developing this sector is necessary to provide food and clothing for the increasing number of the population. This is also necessary to develop and promote other sectors, particularly industry, which depends on agricultural products for raw materials and production requirements. In addition, the agricultural sector plays a major role in economic and social development, since it contributes to national production, creates job opportunities, and provides foreign currency through exports.

It has been observed that developing this sector can be done by largely depending on local resources. The sector needs only a limited quantity of exported materials. The necessary human, natural, and investment resources are available in Syria, or can be made available. What is required is to mobilize these resources in the agricultural sector and use all of these resources in the best way possible. This can be done through complementary policies and measures that are implemented in a harmonious and balanced fashion as part of a comprehensive program.

When we review the current development in the agriculture and irrigation sector, we see the great attention accorded to this sector and the efforts being made to promote this sector. We also see the great achievement that has been made by providing the elements of production and auxiliary services. Hence, the achievements made thus far in operations, production, and income. However, despite these efforts and achievements, we still have a long way to go as part of our comprehensive program to develop the agricultural sector. This is especially true if we take into consideration the contributions we expect from this sector through its role in economic and social development.

The positive results achieved over the past years bear out the sound approach toward investment in the agricultural sector, deeming it the sector number one in the national economy that can play a major role in meeting the basic demands of the citizenry. It can also provide the economic sector with its basic requirements, while exporting the surplus.

Among these results are the following:

A. The Gross Domestic Product [GDP] rose from 76.5 billion Syrian pounds in 1990 to 122.7 billion Syrian pounds in 1993, according to current prices.

B. The contribution of this sector to the GDP rose from 28.5 percent in 1990 to 31 percent in 1993.

C. The growth rate during the same period, 1990 to 1993, totaled 27 percent, according to fixed prices. This rate reflects the quantitative increases in this pioneering sector. The following are examples of increases in some crops in 1993, as follows: Wheat, 3.6 million tonnes compared to 2 million tonnes in 1990; cotton, 640,000 tonnes compared to 440,000 tonnes in 1990; sugar beet, 1.4 million tonnes in 1993 compared to 422,000 tonnes in 1990. The same goes for other agricultural crops. Based on this, the government will continue to work to increase agricultural production, develop the quantitative and qualitative yield of commodities, enhance the efficiency of economic performance, and give priority to producing strategic crops. It will also develop the means of production, provide all the necessary requirements—in proper amounts and qualities—and at the required times, increase returns, adopt modern technical methods, improve guidance services, and concentrate on and encourage scientific research. This is in addition to encouraging investment in this sector to set up integral agricultural projects. At the same time, we stress the need to take full advantage of available water resources by using the most modern technical means. We should also adopt measures to irrigate and reclaim more land, set up dams and canals, and follow up on the implementation of these projects by drawing up programs and timetables for all irrigation projects under way. We should also take to task those who neglect their duties and reward those who perform well.

2. Processing Industry: The country has witnessed a great development in the processing industry, which had a great and direct impact on building a large and versatile industrial base. The manifestations of this base were clearly displayed by the increase in the GDP of this sector during the 1990- 1993 period according to the current prices. The value of the GDP increased from 14.1 billion Syrian pounds in 1990 to 20.8 billion Syrian pounds in 1993. This means an increase by 47.5 percent. The GDP value increased with the fixed prices from 4.9

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billion pounds in 1990 to 5.7 Syrian pounds in 1993. This means an increase of 16.03 percent.

The government's strategy in the industrial sector focuses on the following:

A. Developing Syrian industries of distinguished quality, such as the industries which rely on local raw materials, along with the ability to market the industrial products and to secure the appropriate specifications for foreign competition.

B. Taking into consideration the backward and forward integration [takamul amami wa khalfi] between industries, benefiting fully from the industrial sectors, and establishing industries linked to agricultural development.

C. Transferring knowledge and expertise, along with renewing factories, equipment, and apparatuses.

D. Producing spare parts locally whenever possible.

E. Reinforcing the research, administration, and training centers, focusing in particular on the periodic maintenance, and bringing to account negligent persons and those who fail to do their job in this field.

F. Encouraging the industries which depend on the local raw materials and diversifying them to replace the imported materials as much as we can.

G. Amending the structure of exports and imports within the framework of the objectives of production, investment, and consumption.

H. Giving the boards of directors the necessary powers to formulate the policies for public enterprises and to achieve their objectives. These boards shall be fully responsible for approving the plans and implementing them in accordance with the state's policy and general plans. This was included in Decree No. 20 which was issued recently.

I. Adopting the principle of economic administration in the public sector's installations, and giving these administrations great powers to perform their tasks freely. This necessitates the following:

—Continuing to modernize whatever is necessary of the public sector's laws.

—Continuing to link manpower to the production plans in harmony with the production capacity available in the production lines in a way to increase production.

—Continuing to link wages to production, and granting incentives in accordance with sound and true bases which guarantee the increase of production, good quality and specifications, and a good economic profit.

—Continuing to set plans of replacement and renewal in a way that guarantees the safeguarding or increasing the available production capacities, removing any bottlenecks in the production lines, and implementing the adopted plans. In fact, there are several projects which are being renewed or developed in the field of television, refrigerators, engines, tractors, and tire industries. All these industries began to improve the quality and quantity of production. There is also the possibility of further increasing production in the future. For example, there is a plan to increase the production of the iron factory in Hamah from approximately 100,000 tonnes to more than 165,000 tonnes per year. Contracting on this development is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. There are many examples. The ministers can answer questions on this during the discussion to give the Assembly the true picture of what is taking place regarding renewal, replacement, or the execution of new projects.

—Reducing production costs and addressing the causes of high costs.

This will be done by increasing production, controlling spending, preventing waste of resources, and ideal operation of lines. In addition, administration will be given freedom to provide its requirements at the appropriate time without this affecting its production plans, and this has been an existing situation.

—Working to achieve economic returns proportionate with the capital invested.

The government has been working to achieve some balance regarding the distribution of the sites of the means of production, so as to include all regions. This will be done through annual plans and the approvals given to projects based on Investment Law No. 10 of 1991, as well as projects for the private sector licensed in accordance with Law No. 103. At the same time, the government will continue to encourage and protect handicraft and traditional industries. It will also encourage personal initiatives in work and scientific research in the field of processing industries.

3. Extraction Industry: The government has paid special attention to drilling oil and mineral resources, since they represent latent national wealth. This wealth needs to be discovered, drilled, and invested in order to support the national economy and supply it with foreign currency that provides the requirements for development projects and imported consumption needs on the one hand and enhances the trade balance on the other. In this sector, the GDP has risen by 18.5 percent by fixed prices between 1990-1993. This is in spite of the drop in the value of the GDP by current prices during the same period by 17.3 percent due to the sharp decline in world oil prices.

The government shall continue to pay special attention to this sector and to continue discovery, drilling, and investment operations. It will also develop the existing oil fields to increase the size of the latent reserve for investment in all natural resources. At the same time, the government will meet the demands of refineries of light and heavy oil.

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Incidentally, we are now considering setting up a new refinery to meet the demands of consumption and exportation. We will shortly announce the establishment of this refinery. Naturally, this project will cost a lot.

4. Foreign and Internal Trade: The commercial sector saw bustling activity between 1990-1993, especially after the issuance of Law No. 10 of 1991. This is in addition to the issuance of some regulations and instructions that concern foreign trade and allowing the importation of many commodities that are necessary for production or consumption. Add to this linking importation to exporting locally produced goods. For example, the country used to import 98 percent of sugar. The public sector now imports less than 30 percent, and the rest is imported by the private sector. Of course, we import what is necessary for the ration card. Therefore, the volume of trade has increased as far as the private sector is involved.

In addition, it has always been the government's view—through the measures it has taken—that meeting the shortage of some items and providing some others should not be done only by obligatory measures, but by providing these items in a legal and orderly manner. Therefore, the complaints voiced by citizens and by some members of the People's Assembly—about smuggling, for example—have been addressed. Now it is allowed to import almost all the items needed by the citizens. The private sector has imported many of these items through the surplus of exports and through encouraging exports and the availability of the foreign currency that is needed for importation.

As a result of this great, distinguished activity, the trade sector's contribution to the GDP in 1993—by market price—totaled 25 percent by current prices and 19 percent by fixed prices. The trade sector now comes second in the order of importance for the GDP by market price, after the agriculture sector. The value of the GDP of this sector—by market price—rose between 1990-1993 to 66 percent by current prices and 31 percent by fixed prices.

The government will continue to pay attention to the trade sector, to achieve the following:

1. Speeding up the cycle of production and its growth and reconsidering the structure of the institutions and firms of the public sector in light of the change in economic conditions and activating these parties to reduce their expenditures, enhance the efficiency of their performance, and increase their returns.

2. Increasing the public sector's support for internal trade and amending legislation that governs the method of operation, provided the criterion of revenues is the main factor in assessing the performance of the public sector's firms and institutions.

3. Reconsidering the capital of the public sector's firms and institutions and specifying the necessary capital that enables them to carry out their assigned role.

4. Giving incentives to workers in the public sector and linking these incentives to sale figures.

5. Concentrating on upgrading the qualifications of the administration and staff, modernizing the methods of operations, paying attention to training, and developing their database to enable them to improve their performance in local and foreign markets.

6. Providing basic consumer commodities on the local market to meet increasing demand.

7. Stemming monopoly and exploitation of basic consumer commodities.

8. Supporting consumer cooperative societies and expanding their contribution.

9. Increasing the efficiency of supply control.

10. Supporting laboratories that test foodstuffs to find out any violations of specifications.

11. Using price as a tool and economic incentive to increase production and bring about a fair balance of income.

12. Establishing a fund to review prices as a means to achieve the greatest measure of stability and alleviate the burdens facing the public.

13. Modifying the structure of exports and imports as part of the objectives of production, investment, and consumption.

14. Provide stable and new markets for exports and appropriate markets that take into consideration the cost of imports.

The government has sought to provide all the necessary commodities to meet the needs of local consumption by allowing the importation of what is not produced locally. It has also given special attention to exportation, since it is a basic issue that should be given strong support. We should enable our products to compete on foreign markets so as to finance the needs of imports.

The government is considering establishing a bank to develop exports and enable exporters to increase their export activity. The bank will also provide the necessary facilities for them. The government is also working to develop foreign trade regulations, taking into consideration domestic, regional, and international economic changes. In addition, the government will simplify import and export procedures.

Further, the government will work to unify exchange rates in the country and foreign currency rates when charging customs fees. This will be done in stages and in a studied manner, in order to achieve a balance between exports and imports; consumption and production; income and expenditure; cost and prices; and between the flow of commodities and cash flow. Cash surplus will be geared toward production investments as part of a comprehensive, integral economic and industrial plan.

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The main objectives of foreign trade are the following:

A. Continuing to link importation to exportation, supporting the role of the foreign trade institutions, improving the status of the trade balance, and implementing the state plan to make use of the wide expertise achieved by these institutions in imports to serve exports. There will be special concentration on exporting agricultural products, foodstuffs, and handicrafts and finding stable foreign markets for them. This is in addition to providing the requirements for their production from the export revenues and removing all obstacles to exportation.

B. Reviewing foreign trade regulations with a view to protecting local production, encouraging exports, and reducing unnecessary imports.

C. Stressing the need for the quality control agencies to play their role so as to improve the quality of exported items.

D. Participating in Arab fairs and markets with proven feasibility.

E. Enhancing the activity of free zones so they can play their role in attracting Arab and foreign capital and investing in these zones.

F. Activating transit trade through Syria.

G. Enhancing and expanding economic and trade ties with Arab and friendly countries, and enhancing the role of inter-Arab trade, removing obstacles, and adhering to the provisions of bilateral and multilateral Arab agreements.

H. Expanding the contribution of tourism to increasing the country's foreign currency revenues.

I. Raising the level of tourist services by setting up an integrated tourist industry.

J. Encouraging domestic and popular tourism.

K. Encouraging Arab and foreign investment and encouraging Syrian expatriates to participate in launching and investing in tourist projects.

L. Encouraging the private and mixed sectors to participate in tourist investment.

5. Electricity, Gas, and Water:

In the field of electricity:

The government has made distinguished efforts, especially over the past few years, to reduce the shortage of power supply. Electricity has been used for lighting in public places, homes, and industrial, agricultural, and services projects in Syria.

New contracts have been signed to provide more electricity, which will be put to use shortly. Over the past few years, we have signed contracts to provide around 2,500 megawatts, some of which has already been put to use. I mention the Jandal power station, whose capacity totals 600 megawatts. There is also the expansion of Widyan al-Rabi', with around 256 megawatts. During this year, two more turbines will be inaugurated. You also know that we have signed new contracts in al-Nasiriyah and Zayzun. Recently, a contract was signed to build a power station operated by steam and gas near Aleppo, with a capacity of 1,000 megawatts. This station will meet the demand of the northern region and save some money. This contract is in the process of final endorsement. The government is now basically interested in modernizing the electricity network and building new transformation stations.

On the president's directives, we will continue to study our electricity needs in light of ongoing developments and the increasing rates of consumption. The electricity sector has made significant progress over the past two years. We will make more efforts to improve this sector and provide the necessary electricity reserve for the coming years. As a matter of fact, we have no problem now generating electricity. There are power generation stations with good capacity. Some cutoffs may happen from time to time as a result of periodic maintenance by the Ministry of Electricity in some regions. We have no problem at all with regard to power generation. Currently, we have signed contracts to provide new capacities and technical studies are under way to sign other contracts and get new capacities. This shows the government's concern about meeting the demand for electricity.

The government is eager to finish the projects under way. At the same time, the government will enhance the efficiency of the electricity network, raise the capacity of the power generation stations, and ease the pressure on the conduction and distribution networks. The government stresses the need to develop administrative and economic action in this vital sector. The government will also continue to provide electricity services to the countryside according to its plan. It will also provide all the requirements of this process, such as electricity poles, lines, watt-hour meters, and the necessary funds, whether in foreign currency or local currency.

Following are some examples of the achievements made in the field of electricity:

The number of villages receiving electricity services in the countryside has risen from 7,491 in 1990 to 7,701 in 1993; the number of subscribers has risen from 2.131 million in 1990 to 2.391 million in 1993, with a 13 percent annual increase.

In the field of drinking water:

The government's policy in this field aims at providing pure drinking water to all citizens in Syria, in urban and rural areas, taking into consideration the following:

—Increasing the individual's rate of water consumption in accordance with standardized needs.

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—Making the best use of water resources and maintaining and preserving these resources against pollution.

—Concentrating on setting up huge water projects and doing away, as much as possible, with small projects to minimize the cost of operation and continue to provide water for consumption.

—Trying not to waste any water in the main pipes and networks.

The government has signed contracts to purchase mechanical and electrical equipment, flexible pipes, and other equipment, for 44 projects in Syria. Toward this end, credit accounts have been opened and the equipment has started to arrive in Syria. We think that by the second half of next year, all the projects will be operational. Some of them have already started operations. Emphasis has also been laid on some major water projects to put them into operation, such as the fourth water pipeline project to Aleppo and the third pipeline project in Latakia, in addition to the Jurin water project, which has been operated. We also have another project in which we will provide the necessary water pipes to build a pipeline that carries water from Barada water springs to al-Fijah. Currently, we are reviewing several studies to present them to the State Planning Commission to see what can be implemented as part of the next plan of water projects. Some of these projects are, for example, al-Saffan water project; Bayt Yashur water project; the al- Zarqa spring project, and other projects.

Constructions:

Syria has followed a distinguished experiment when it created several companies and institutions of public constructions to implement specialized projects in all construction fields for the public sector. The public constructions companies have played an important role in the implementation of huge water projects, reclamation of land, electricity generation projects, and other vital and strategic projects. They have done so with a high measure of accuracy and efficiency. This fact is acknowledged by international studies offices. The construction companies now have engineering and technical staff with high skills that can undertake huge and highly technical projects. These companies have all the necessary heavy engineering equipment and prefabricated factories for constructions, warehouses, etc. which can be seen by everybody. These companies have built first-class roads and dams, reclaimed land, built silos, mills, and bridges. They have also contributed to the construction of sisterly Lebanon. The number of workers in the public construction companies has totaled more than 103,000 engineers and technicians, laborers, and temporary workers who are employed according to the nature of each project.

The number of these projects totaled 2,700, distributed among all governorates. As of 1 January 1994, the overall cost of the project contracts whose implementation is currently under way by public construction enterprises and corporations exceeded 90 billion Syrian pounds. Forty-three billion Syrian pounds worth of projects have been implemented. These projects have met needs in the areas of irrigation, land reclamation, electric power, school buildings, governmental services, transport and communications, storage, etcetera.

The government will seek to promote and activate this sector in order to lend it the necessary flexibility to enable it to carry out its missions dynamically and efficiently and also to allow it to complete the projects it carries out on schedule.

Services

The attention the government has accorded to collective, social, and personal services has not been less than the attention it has accorded to production sectors. For, it has sought to render collective and individual services a direct product of the economic development achieved. It has also sought to make available the requirements of the various economic and social activities. From this premise, the services sector, which has witnessed a large-scale expansion in Syria will always remain the focus of the government's attention.

In the field of transport, communications, and storage:

The importance of transport, communications, and storage acquires added significance with the increase in production in other economic sectors, chief among which are the agricultural sector and the intermediary industries sector, and also with the development seen in the movement of passengers from provincial capitals and also between provincial capitals and rural areas, not to mention the foreign transport activities carried out via sea ports, airports, and land outlets. Hence, the government has sought to achieve a horizontal expansion in the asphalted roads network, and continued the effort to complete the railroad network, including the required links with storage and export centers. The government will also seek to build many bridges and multidirectional flyovers to eliminate traffic bottlenecks. Likewise, the government will seek to increase the number of ships affiliated with the maritime transportation fleet. A tender to purchase several ships is expected to be awarded toward the end of the year. Moreover, the production capacity of the Latakia Port and Tartus Port will be increased. The two ports will be quipped with the most up-to-date machines and equipment to match the export/import operations in accordance with the best modern technical methods.

The air transport fleet has been augmented with modern passenger planes to match the developments witnessed in the air transport field. Moreover, new international air routes have been opened. The work mechanism pursued by the air transport sector has been streamlined. The same holds true for the operations of airports, which have been supplied with the most up-to-date equipment

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and machines, and also with the devices and tools that can help planes take off and land at airports and promote the passengers' comfort and safety.

In the field of communications:

I would like to say that the completion of the project to expand and modernize communications in Syria is currently in its final stages. This project has not been exclusively confined to subscribers' telephone lines. As a matter of fact, it is a full-blown project that covers the entire communications network inside Syria and with the outside world.

The components of this project consist of the following:

—Telephone exchanges for subscribers at 115 centers, with a capacity exceeding 1 million numbers. The project that initially had 700,000 or 600,000 lines has now almost 1 million, or 1,035,000 lines.

Likewise, we will continue our effort to expand in this area. We will have new lines added. A new tender calls for the introduction of 250,000 new lines. The Syrian Corporation [not further identified] is expected to assemble and manufacture these numbers after obtaining the patent rights from manufacturing firms. This endeavor is meant to enable us to manufacture similar telephone exchanges. Hence, the modernization process, which involves an increase in the number of telephone exchanges and subscribers' numbers, will continue. It will be financed by the State Enterprise for Post and Telephone.

Therefore, this need will be met successively and continuously. There will be no cessation in this regard.

—Five national automatic telephone exchanges with a capacity of 50,000 circuits and one international telephone exchange with a capacity of 10,000 circuits of which 35,100 have been put into service.

—One international telephone exchange in Damascus with an ultimate capacity of 10,000 of which 7,100 circuits have been put into service. The circuits provided by the international telephone exchange in the past were much less than that figure before this project was executed.

—Local telephone networks to subscribers with sufficient capacities that will guarantee flexibility to meet the requests for new installation and transfers and that can accommodate the new [words indistinct].

—Modern communication networks between governorates and cities.

—Setting up centers to maintain the equipment and centers to train the staff to operate, maintain, and support the networks.

—Providing space telephone links with the American Continent. Investment in this project was put in the first half of 1994 at a capacity of 480 circuits. Furthermore, modernizing and expanding links with Lebanon through fiberoptics and a new microwave network.

In the field of international communications, work is underway to execute the following projects:

—Ogarit Cable Project. This is an undersea, fiberoptics cable with a capacity of 1,920 circuits to link Tartus with Cyprus. The project will also link Syria to the international cable that extends from Southeast Asia to Marseilles. Syria leased 1,453 circuits in this cable. Investment in this project will be put during 1995.

—(?Tayyar) Cable Project. This is an undersea, fiberoptics cable between Tartus and Alexandria to link the two brotherly countries, Syria and Egypt. Investment in this project will be put in early 1996.

The new projects which will start soon include, first, the installation of new rural automatic telephone exchanges in 206 centers with a capacity of 250,000 numbers; and, second, the installation of a new international telephone exchange in Aleppo with a capacity of 600 circuits.

The government has paid special attention to the storage activity in view of the fact that storage is important to preserve products and then use them at the proper time. The Government has built and is building grain storehouses with a capacity of 5 million tonnes, either in the form of (?concrete) warehouses or the regular silos, including the steel silos that facilitate the process of delivery, storage, and transport at both the production and (?import) points to ensure that the reserves are maintained and to limit the waste that results from storage in open space.

At the same time, the Government is working and will continue to work on building storage and refrigerating units at various parts of the country in order to store part of the products when these are in season, and then sell them to the market when they are out of season.

The government encourages the private and mixed sectors to set up storage and refrigerating units by giving them licenses to do so, in accordance with Investment Law no. 10 of 1991. This has important economic objectives the government seeks.

Finance, Insurance, and Banking Sector

Banking and Insurance Field

The special attention the government gave to banking and the importance of developing its services and development role in the march of the national economy, improving performance, and increasing the confidence of those dealing with it led to the following:

—The number of bank branches increased from 193 in 1992 to 206 branches in 1994.

—The volume of assets and loans increased.

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—The work mechanism was defined for most bank branches which were provided with modern technical equipment.

—Annual loans to farmers increased by enhancing the role of the Agricultural Cooperative Bank.

—The industrial and commercial loans were increased in accordance with the production requirements law and by marketing this production.

—The loans for housing, hospitals, and tourist projects were increased.

—The role of insurance services was bolstered in quantity and quality, and the activities of the Syrian Insurance Public Authority were developed.

Due to the importance of the banking sector, which is a sensitive and vital factor in expediting development and drawing the savings of citizens, the government intends to work to realize the following during the next stage:

—study the possibility of setting up a bank for investments and another bank for export;

—continue to support the banking sector with all its requirements so it will play its active role in encouraging saving and investment in accordance with advance banking bases;

—amend the regulations of specialized banking operations in accordance with the economic development;

-continue to link the bank branches with public administrations through banking connection networks;

-qualify unqualified banking cadres and train them in the best modern banking activities, including setting up a higher banking institute;

—draw on technical banking expertise;

—facilitate depositing and withdrawing operations in accordance with the development of the national economy;

—secure real estate loans to encourage housing, health, tourist activities;

—support productive cooperative societies;

—reconsider interest rates on bank loans in accordance with the conditions of the national economy;

—promote various insurance services so these services can reach a broader base of citizens all over the country.

Real Estate and Housing

With its plans, policy, and measures, the government seeks to provide necessary proper housing for citizens. In this regard, the government was able to achieve certain accomplishments. It took into account the need to build houses in the cities and rural areas in accordance with certified regulations plans in order to curb unorganized expansion and prevent encroachment on agricultural land, set up the necessary services and public facilities to make it easier for citizens to obtain these through the easiest and cheapest possible ways, encourage stability, and utilize available energies and financial resources to increase economic growth and improve the standard of living.

The government, however, is still looking forward to making further progress in this regard to realize the following:

—to complete all topographical and regulations plans to use in the construction of housing units that will be commensurate with the population increase;

—to control unorganized expansion and the encroachment on agricultural land when constructing housing units;

—to encourage the building of economic and health housing units in accordance with one's needs;

—to support housing cooperatives;

Sewerage

The government continues to establish treatment plants for sewage water in the provincial capitals and major population centers in order to protect the environment, limit pollution, and enhance preventive health means. The following is being carried out:

—Sewage water pipelines and treatment plants are being built in the following cities: Damascus, Hims, Hama, Aleppo, Tartus, Latakia, and al-Salamiyah.

—Studies on the remaining plants in other provincial capitals are being completed so these projects can be executed in accordance with the available means.

—Aid is given to cities and municipalities to complete sewerage projects in them in accordance with the priorities.

The government also continues to provide topographical and organizational plans for all cities, towns, and villages with a population of over 1,000 citizens. It also continues to preserve and protect green areas wherever they may be. The government will continue to provide topographical and organizational plans in the coming years in order to reach the set objectives.

Tourism

The government works on encouraging investment in the tourism sector by granting facilities and exemptions to these projects to complete the infrastructure of the tourism industry, in accordance with the following:

—encouraging investment in tourism for the private and mixed sectors and giving them privileges to build hotels, tourist villages and complexes and other tourist facilities so that these projects will cover all of Syria;

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—encouraging popular organizations and professional associations to set up projects related to popular tourism;

—attending important Arab and world tourist fairs;

—organizing annual festivals, exhibitions, and seminars to market tourism;

—strengthening the role of Syria in the World Tourism Organization and the other tourism organizations;

—supporting national tourism and travel bureaus to ensure the arrival of 2 million tourists in 1995;

—equipping the higher hotel management colleges in Damascus, Aleppo, Latakia and opening the hotel management college in Hims;

—working on setting up new hotel management vocational schools.

Education

Education has a special status and role to play to rise to a better level in life, expedite development, and join the model march of civilization. Therefore, education in Syria has been given special attention in all five-year and one-year plans in order to develop elementary, preparatory, secondary, intermediate, and higher education stages; to sustain its substance; to develop its regulations and tools with the objective of achieving qualitative development and serving the educational goals within the framework of the state's general policy to arrive at the following:

—building a generation committed to the issues of its people and nation;

—linking education to requirements of development and needs of life in the local environment; on this basis, the government is interested in all stages of education without exception. The government emphasizes the role of vocational and technical training, guided by leader struggler Hafiz al-Asad's instructions in this regard.

The government's interest in the education sector has been demonstrated by the annual budgets. Allocations for pre-university education have increased from 3.4 billion Syrian pounds in 1990 to 5.4 billion Syrian pounds in 1993, recording an increase of 59 percent. The higher education's budget has increased from 2.3 billion Syrian pounds in 1990 to 3.4 billion Syrian pounds in 1993, recording an increase of 48 percent. In light of that, the number of sections at elementary schools increased from 73,940 sections in 1990 to 80,644 sections in 1993. The number of students at the elementary stage increased from 2,357,981 in 1990 to 2,573,181 students [in 1993]. The number of sections at public preparatory and secondary schools decreased from 22,421 in 1990 to 22,136 sections in 1993. This decrease is attributed to the fact that many sections at public secondary schools are used for vocational training. The number of students at public preparatory and secondary schools amounted to 856,943 students in 1990. This figure decreased to 845,621 in 1993, because of the tendency to join vocational training after the preparatory stage. The number of students at vocational and technical classes increased from 62,439 students in 1990 to 63,097 in 1993.

The number of higher education institutes increased from 119 institutes including 41,000 students in 1990 to 125 colleges including about 44,000 in 1993. The number of university colleges increased from 44 colleges including 163,000 students in 1990 to 47 colleges including 174,000 students in 1993.

The competent state agencies have focused their attention on the field of scientific research and allocated the required funds. This field must be expanded and given a higher degree of attention at universities to ensure that positive results are attained in the interest of the national economy. Therefore, the government's orientation for the next stage will be as follows:

—An emphasis will be placed on scientific research and supporting it and promoting fields of research and studies in accordance with programmed and studied bases in a manner that leads to achieving the objectives of scientific research and picking its fruits in all fields of life and wherever there is an urgent and definite need within the framework of higher education and universities.

—There will be an emphasis on vocational and technical training, given its extreme importance in meeting the country's needs, so this type of training contributes to promoting and expediting the process of progress and development.

—The government will continue to meet the needs resulting from the growing number of students flowing into all stages of education, such as government buildings, teachers, and qualified scientific cadres of all specializations. The government will continue to provide laboratories, related equipment, public facilities, and all services. This is to ensure that the educational process will continue on a sound basis and that its material, financial, and human requirements are met.

Health

The government attaches the required importance to health activity, and not in response to a temporary orientation or need. Rather, this policy is based on the slogan "Health for Everyone." Therefore, the state has applied the primary health care system, taking into consideration society's actual needs and the level that it has attained. This health care system works to narrow any gaps between the health services in the various governorates, including urban and rural areas.

The state is working to increase job and investment opportunities at existing health installations and to expedite the implementation of projects under execution.

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With this in mind, the government has managed during the past period of time to provide the following:

—medical equipment for the group of the martyr Basil al-Asad hospitals, which include 1,255 beds. Those hospitals are located in Tartus, al-Qardahah, Dar 'Atiyah, Manbij, Abu Kamal, Dummar, and Aleppo;

—sophisticated equipment for operations rooms, anesthetization equipment, and equipment for comprehensive clinics at the hospitals in Damascus, the Damascus Rural Area, Dar'a, al-Suwayda', al-Qunaytirah, Hims, Tadmur, al-Sukhnah, Hamah, al-Salamiyah, Idlib, Aleppo, Manbij, Tartus, al-Qadmus, Latakia, Jablah, al-Raqqah, al- Hasakah, al-Qamishli, al-Malikiyah, Dayr al-Zawr, al-Mayadin, and Abu Kamal;

—a developed first aid system in all governorates;

—an echo encephalograph in Damascus and Aleppo;

—a computerized axial tomography scanner for the hospitals in al-Suwayda', Damascus, Dar'a, Dayr 'Atiyah, Hims, tartus, Latakia, Hamah, Idlib, Aleppo, al-Raqqah, Dayr al-Zawr, and al-Hasakah governorates;

—chemical analysis and germs and blood laboratory equipment for many public hospitals;

—the number of doctors at public hospitals, health centers, and comprehensive clinics has increased from 11,682 doctors in 1990 to 13,963 doctors in 1993, thus bringing the average of doctors to the population in 1993 to one doctor per 966 citizens, compared to one doctor per 1,027 in 1990;

—the number of dentists has increased from 3,841 in 1990 to 6,238 in 1993, thus bringing the average of dentists in 1993 to one dentist per 2,147 citizens, compared to one dentist per 3,154 citizens in 1990.

Social Care

The government has given the various types of social care institutes the required importance to enable them to develop in a manner compatible with the role that they should play. The government takes into consideration that the skilled disabled should be enrolled in professions and jobs that agree with their disabilities and turn them into producers. The government is also keen on preparing and training Syrian women to enroll them in jobs and enable them to fully play their role in building the homeland and to benefit from their potential and their contribution to development.

The government will take measures to secure decent lives and secure a future for workers and their families in their old age, or in case they sustain a job accident or have a profession-related disease. The government will support this activity to help it cope with the spirit of the age and the requirements of social development and to enable the social institutes to meet the growing, continued, and various needs of the society.

The Environment:

The government continues to take measures to preserve the homeland's environment and resources in all fields. On the national level, the required measures are being taken to safeguard the water, air, soil, and living creatures. In this context, polluted water and air treatment units are being installed to guarantee the safety of the soil and of the living creatures. National standards have been set to specify the allowed pollution rates. Licenses for industrial installations are given now only on the basis of an estimation of environmental effects.

Meanwhile, measures have been taken to protect the environment against existing activities. The government will soon approve legislation for protecting and developing the environment. On the Arab level, programs to combat desertification and industrial pollution are being implemented. Programs on environmental awareness and information are also being implemented in accordance with the recommendations of the Council of Arab Ministers of Environment and in cooperation with all competent agencies.

On the international level, Syria has joined all international agreements on the protection and development of the environment. Syria takes part in those programs through programs on protecting the ozone layer and safeguarding the Mediterranean against pollution. Syria also takes part in programs on combating desertification, banning the transportation of dangerous waste across the border, protecting the soil against salinization and erosion, and developing forests.

Culture:

One year after the other, cultural activities are coming to reflect a profound understanding of culture and its role in building the homeland and the citizen intellectually and cognitively in a world with an accelerating development of means of exchanging information and cultural production through various means. Syria's cultural edifices have become remarkable cultural landmarks. Those include the al-Asad Library, which is considered the most important and largest national library in the region in terms of its activities, broad computerized, up-to-date services, and its annual Arab book fair. Such edifices also include the national theater building and the opera house, whose establishment coincided with the establishment of a symphonic band of international standards. Meanwhile, opera works have been introduced, reflecting our brilliant theater movement and musical progress. Specialized musical higher colleges have been set up. A movie city project has been set up on an area of 70,000 square meters. All that will make Syria an attractive center for regional movie activity. There has been an increase in domestic movie production. Syrian movies have enjoyed a distinguished presence and won high prizes at world forums and festivals.

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Preparations have started to build a museum of the modern arts. It will be no less than a match for similar museums in the advanced world states. It will reflect the bright image of the splendid advancement of the plastic arts in Syria. New cultural centers have been established. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Culture continues to set up more museums in the various governorates. In addition, great efforts are being exerted to restore archaeological sites. Excavations have been crowned with discoveries of extreme importance. Many archaeological sites are being surveyed.

Meanwhile, more efforts are being exerted to obliterate illiteracy before the end of the century, revive our heritage, issue distinguished and fine books in all areas of knowledge, and promote the level of the various specialized periodicals. Cultural seminars and various arts, movie, theater, and folklore festivals are being held in Syria, constituting important cultural activities on the domestic, Arab, and international levels. This picture is complemented by Syria's growing participation in various international cultural and arts festivals, and also by the setting up of Syrian cultural and archaeological exhibitions abroad. The latest of these exhibitions was the recent Syrian archaeological exhibition in Paris. It was held under the slogan "Syria: A Memory and a Culture," and lasted eight months. It coincided with various cultural activities.

Many world books and bulletins also continue to be issued to highlight the importance of Syria's culture and world vanguard role. Activating the role of culture at home in accordance with an Arab, human cultural perspective and advancing our culture's splendid presence abroad in a manner that reflects our true image are part of what we aspire to and work for in order to turn it into tangible reality.

The Media

The enormous development in communications has led to increasing the influence of the media in public life and in the international arena, both negatively and positively in view of varying opinions and ideas. The media are a means of awareness, education, and explanation of facts. It may, at the same rate, be used to deceive people, distort facts, and destroy the human's personality. Since the media explain and clarify the state's general policy, we work all the time on providing the material and technical means needed for that sector to help it play its national and pan-Arab role as best as possible by continuing to develop and improve the radio, the television, and the press so that our media can go along with modern communications in the world through the following:

—increasing the government's support to the Information Ministry and its agencies by providing the material, technical, and human resources needed to improve the media performance both professionally and in terms of production;

—expanding the networks of television and radio transmission both in terms of time and the area it covers so that the clear radio transmission can cover all the world and good television transmission can cover all areas in Syria, as well as the neighboring countries, on both channels one and two;

—completing the necessary preparations to launch the Syrian television space channel in order to make the Syrian television transmission reach large areas in the Arab homeland, Europe, and our Syrian and Arab expatriate communities in the foreign countries to present a living picture of modern Syria;

—the government will work on setting up a special system to receive television space channels that present top cultural, artistic, and education programs and then retransmit them to the citizens subscribing to this service, which will curb the harm brought about by certain space channels that intrude on our cultural identity and cultural, human, and ethical values. Therefore, there is no future for those who violate the law and install satellite receiving equipment without a license. They must prepare themselves because these violations will be banned once and for all. The Information Ministry will announce that soon after we provide the alternative;

—strengthening the experience of the national screen on the level of production to ensure the launch of the Syrian artists both locally and on Arab level;

—extending bridges of media links on both the Arab and world levels and striking media agreements with the fraternal Arab and friendly foreign states to give our media further flexibility and effectiveness. The government will strengthen the role of the Syrian Arab News Agency, expand its transmission network, and expand the network of its correspondents and bureaus abroad.

Moral Values

Building the moral structure of the individual is the basis for building the psychological and ethical structure. It will also strengthen the values of right and justice and entrench amity and tolerance. The government will support the activities of the Awqaf Ministry and develop religious education to help it achieve its supreme values in the society.

Mr. Speaker, Honorable Members: With love and amity, harmony and cooperation, and serious work Syria has been forging ahead through its own path since the Corrective Movement. It has been moving with constant and direct interaction between its objectives and needs, and between requirements and developments to build a new society, following a unique, distinguished course based on popular democracy, political and economic pluralism, national unity, and defensive ability. The aim of this course is to achieve the Arab nation's pan-Arab mission.

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God has bequeathed our people with a great leader, President Hafiz al-Asad, the builder of this lofty edifice and the maker of its splendid glory. He has paved for Syria the path of life with a will buttressed by trials, a heart with love embracing all citizens, an intellect that foresees events, no matter how far and dispersed they are. His experienced and penetrating eye does not miss the goal or the road no matter how complex directions may be. With God's help and support, and thanks to President al-Asad's determination, will, and unique leadership, Syria has become an advanced and strong country. Under his leadership, Syria overcame obstacles with determination.

In the past 25 years, Syria has taken long strides and gone through difficult experiences. With the same determination and will, Syria continues its advancement, development, and modernization, getting closer and closer to its objectives, with self-confidence and self-reliance, rallying around its leader, renewing the determination to build, expand the economy, enhance the people's potential, and exploit the natural wealth of this good land. Every political, economic, social, or defensive achievement reflects the ambitious plans that have been laid down, the funds that have been allocated, and the various programs that have been implemented. They indicate growing, advanced expertise, able builders, the dangerous obstacles and difficulties that have been removed, and the generous sacrifices that have been offered. They demonstrate the greatness and splendid planning of the leader, who cast his seeds in a fertile soil, constructed huge edifices, and set for Syria in these turbulent times an advanced course and a fortified position in the face of challenges, enabling Syria to attain a high status that is not easy to attain. This status is a source of pride and respect for every citizen in Syria and every human being in the Arab world.

Syria under President Hafiz al-Asad is facing all the division, disintegration, and weakness in the Arab and regional arena with an economic structure that has multiple, integrated pillars and growing activity, effectiveness, and with investment potential that is improving. The people in Syria appreciate, with deep awareness, what they enjoy in terms of political stability, distinguished economic and social security, a national unity based on very strong foundations, and a democratic system of government based on the reality of our people, the heritage of our nation, and the lessons of our history. Everyone enjoys freedom under which every school of thought and opinion flourish. Constitutional institutions, at the head of which is the People's Assembly, thrive. Political parties, popular organizations, and professional associations are diversified and embrace, organize, and recruit the citizens—men and women—to participate in the public life.

Syria takes pride in its democratic system which allows every citizen to play a role and to offer what he can; a system that gives every worker and peasant, every teacher and lecturer, every doctor and engineer, every technician and craftsman, every artisan and writer, every farmer and industrialist and merchant, and every author and publisher his own association and organization and provides him with a channel and a social tool through which he can express himself and participate in decision-making, starting from the bottom of the political, economic, and social echelon to the top of it. No decision is taken and no measure is implemented without discussing and ratifying it here in the People's Assembly, in the Central Command of the National Progressive Front, in the government's councils and higher committees, in the governorates' councils and administrative units, and in the conferences and seminars which are held here and there and in which important issues and solutions are proposed.

We who were tasked with certain responsibilities have, regardless of our positions, one thing in which we all take pride. It is not the positions and titles, but the opportunity to serve this great people, who have always sacrificed for every cause in which they believed; a people who proved, through thick and thin, in the days of depression and boom, and in the days of joy and sorrow, that they are faithful and loyal to their cause and leader. The people are the true pillar which cannot be shaken in the face of misfortunes. They provide the great energy that has limitless potential and ability and the major power that stands behind the historic leadership of President Hafiz al-Asad, who, together with the people, are rising to make Syria the most impregnable position when other positions collapse, and to make of it, with the independence of its policy and determination, the model of the free country which has fought and is fighting bravely all those who seek to encroach on it, and which sincerely makes peace with all those who seek peace, and who heed the call of right, respond to the call of justice, and respect the values of the world community, which are the basis for dealing and coexistence among the states of the entire world.

Brothers, we tried in this statement to define the directions, policies, and objectives which the government seeks to achieve in the next stage in cooperation with your honorable assembly. We also tried to shed light, whenever needed, on certain actions and achievements that have been scored in the past years. We also gave data and figures and percentages on achievements in certain important services and economic sectors. We believe every project planned and executed by the government and every goal it seeks to achieve has its roots in the past and is based on what has already been achieved. It also has its extension toward the future to deepen and expand what will be achieved. This means the action of the government in the next stage is linked to an integrated development course, and an inter-linked economic and social course which Syria follows persistently.

In this statement we attempted to express the goals, which were set and defined by our leader President Hafiz al-Asad for the next stage, and which we will very seriously seek to achieve in cooperation with each other.

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All the optimism in our view of the future is drawn from the facts, on which our economic, social, and cultural edifice is based; an edifice which is rising and expanding. And on the basis of the examples of that edifice, confidence in our country and the resources of our country is strengthened; and so is the confidence in the ability of the individual who, when he demonstrated his competence with what he has built, has confirmed that he posses a creative energy for everything that will be built.

When we present the government's statement to your honorable assembly, we are certain that your discussion of what has been mentioned in it in terms of objectives, programs, and policies will be effective and fruitful and that the directions you will decide and the recommendations you will make will be considered an indivisible part of the statement. We also stress that the government will seriously work on entrenching cooperation between us and your esteemed council so we can together shoulder the trust and the responsibility before God, the homeland, and the leader.

From God we seek success. Peace be upon you.

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Afghanistan

'Savage' Attack by Supervisory Council in Parwan

LD1711195894 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] A savage attack which was launched last night by the Supervisory Council [Shura-ye Nezar] was repulsed in Ghowrband district.

Quoting jihadi sources in Ghowrband district, Parwan Province, the correspondent of Radio Message of Freedom reports that last night the Supervisory Council launched a surprise attack, led by Wasil [word indistinct], head of security, Parwan Province, on two remote regions of the Ghowrband district—Seya Joy and Sowan. This attack was defeated and the attackers sustained heavy losses.

The report adds: After fleeing, the attackers left behind a large number of weapons and ammunition which were taken as booty by the mojahedin. Soon after the defeat, the Supervisory Council forces put residential regions in Qenchaq under heavy weapons fire, resulting in heavy losses of life and material on local people.

Rabbani Interviews Tajik Film Crew

LD1711181294 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] The press office of the presidency reported to the BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY that esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, today received a Tajik filmmaking crew for a news conference.

The esteemed president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan answered questions raised by Khadem (?Farkhad) Abdollaov, director of the film crew. He commented on the broadening of cooperation between the Islamic State of Afghanistan and the Republic of Tajikistan, saying that Afghanistan's government and people want friendly relations and strengthened political, economic, and cultural ties with neighboring countries, in particular with the countries of Central Asia, including the Republic of Tajikistan.

Our country's president added: Of course, this desire will be realized when peace and security are restored in the two countries and in the region. Therefore, it is vital and necessary to eliminate the evil features of fighting and misunderstanding so that feasible conditions are provided for progress and development. [passage indistinct]

The Tajik filmmaking crew recently arrived in Kabul to hold talks and assess the possibility of making a documentary film on the common history of the people of Tajikistan and Afghanistan.

Iran

General Amir Rahimi Calls For Military Uprising

95LA0042A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 6 Nov 94 p 29

[Interview with General Amir Rahimi, retired opposition officer, by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given—first four paragraphs are AL-MAJALLAH introduction]

[FBIS Translated Text] General Amir Rahimi, 70, has lived in his house in Tehran since his retirement six months after the start of the revolution. He is the most vocal and bold opposition military officer. His telephone does not stop ringing. He maintains numerous contacts with Iranians abroad. Gen. Rahimi is one of the people who took part in Mosadeq's coup against the shah. After the shah returned to Iran, sharp differences broke out between the two because Rahimi opposed the interference of U.S. experts in the Iranian army's decisions. The shah sent him to prison for seven years. When the government of the Islamic revolution assumed power in Tehran, he regained his rank and authority as general, but this only lasted for six months. Rahimi says that the first government under Mehdi Bazargan was afraid of his power and popularity and supected him of plotting to carry out a military coup.

Rahimi's relations with Khomeyni were based on trust. Khomeyni asked him and a group of his officers to form the nucleus of a personal bodyguard force. However, he was forced to retire shortly afterward.

Two weeks ago, Rahimi was summoned for investigation and trial on charges of publishing what was regarded as lies in the Iranian newspaper RESALAT. This veteran officer was known for sending open letters to the Iranian media at home and abroad containing harsh criticism of the Iranian Government. A number of Iranian army officers have demonstrated to protest the authorities' decision to summon the general for trial.

AL-MAJALLAH met with Rahimi in Tehran and conducted the following interview with him:

[AL-MAJALLAH] What are the problems currently facing the officers in the Iranian army?

[Rahimi] The biggest problem is that the Iranian Government forced into retirement the best and most qualified officers after the revolution. This is why the Iraqi army was able to defeat Iran. Before the 1979 revolution, Saddam Husayn used to say that he was afraid of the Iranian army. After the revolution, the Iraqi army was able to occupy Iranian cities and villages. The present Iranian army's command, led by Firoozabadi, Defense Minister Mohammad Foruzandeh, and Shahbani, does not have the necessary qualifications. Its officers are not highly educated. No general in the army can wear a turban and make plans for a military battle.

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[AL-MAJALLAH] There is real suffering and economic hardship in Iran. This is reflected in all sectors of society, including the army. Is a change by force being considered?

[Rahimi] Why not? I know many officers and members of the military who were forced to retire that are grumbling. If they decide to carry out a change, the members who are still in the military will obey them. I am ready to be at the head of the group. The economic problem facing Iran is due to wrong policies and decisions. These have led us to this situation.

[AL-MAJALLAH] If what you say about your desire to lead a movement for change in Iran by force is published, don't you think that you will end up in prison?

[Rahimi] This is possible, but I am not afraid. I tried imprisonment before. I suffered a great deal. I was engaged in confrontations with the shah and others. I am convinced of what I am saying. I am prepared to pay any price to prove what is right. I wish to lead a military coup to change the existing conditions in Iran. But, regrettably, I do not possess sufficient military power to do that.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Half of the military is progovernment Revolution Guard members. Will they support or oppose a change if a decision is made?

[Rahimi] There are no real officers in the Iranian military. The military must be prepared before a coup is declared.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What do you think about the common Iranian people? How do you expect they will react?

[Rahimi] The Iranian people are hungry and tired. The Iranian youth are breaking down. Some of them have committed suicide. Many people have suffered heart attacks because of social and economic pressures. Unemployment is widespread, and numerous problems exist. Furthermore, the present government does not permit the establishment of political parties for the people to express their opinion, because it knows that there are many mistakes.

[AL-MAJALLAH] You were associated with the revolution. What happened? Has the revolution departed from its goals?

[Rahimi] The revolution failed because it did not place the suitable person in the suitable job. The religious leaders occupied all the positions. The qualified people were removed from all vital sectors, such as the military and economy.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Two years ago, when the five-year plan was launched, things began to change in Iran. Are things changing for the better?

[Rahimi] The change for the better will not happen in 50 years unless qualified people take over. The talk about change is just words. The actual situation is completely different.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What is your opinion about the duplicity of decisions and the differences between President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Ayatollah Khamene'i?

[Rahimi] Perhaps they do not like each other. This is a personal matter. However, despite the apparent differences between them, they agree on Iran's policy. They constitute a single group that wants to govern Iran in its own way. They know that if a coup takes place in Iran, the outburst against them will be great.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Can a coup take place in Iran today without outside help?

[Rahimi] No. This is because the government and the Revolution Guard need each other. They will act together against any attempt that is not backed by real power.

[AL-MAJALLAH] Will you agree to lead a foreign-supported coup?

[Rahimi] International approval is needed in order to make a change in Iran. Without such approval, no movement can succeed.

[AL-MAJALLAH] What do you think about Iran's relations with the West under the present government?

[Rahimi] The government is playing around. Instead of establishing a dialogue with the United States, it deals with Japan, Germany, and France. There is a saying in Iran that politics is a bastard. The Iranian policy toward the West is like this. The West and the United States have not made a decision to change the regime in Iran. When they make such a decision, a change will take place very soon. We are waiting like cars without fuel. I read a report in ABRAR that mothers are selling their children because of hunger and poverty. I do not think there is anything worse than this situation.

Yazdi Delivers Tehran Friday Prayers

LD1811121094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 18 Nov 94

[FBIS Translated Text] Simultaneously with the rest of the country, religio-political Friday prayers were held in Tehran under the imamate of Ayatollah [Mohammad] Yazdi [head of the Judiciary]. In his prayer sermons, the acting Friday imam of Tehran, stressing the continuation of the campaign against profiteering, said: As the progress of the work already demonstrates, the issue is very serious. By setting up the organization in charge of supervising the distribution of goods and controlling prices, as well as the organization in charge of governmental penal codes, the government has demonstrated that it will continue this campaign seriously until the achievement of final results.

Referring to the public support for the anti-profiteering campaign and the support of the esteemed leader for this

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campaign, the head of the Judiciary expressed the complete readiness of the Judiciary for cooperating with the government in this field, and described the cooperation of the members of the public as very important for the speedy achievement of the goals of this campaign.

Continuing his sermons, the acting Friday imam of Tehran expressed his appreciation to the government and the Islamic Consultative Majles for preparing, debating, and approving the Second Five Year Plan of the government and for paying due attention to the viewpoints of the esteemed leader of the revolution during the debates on the bill, especially in paying attention to the deprived and vulnerable strata of the society.

Continuing the second Friday prayer sermon, Ayatollah Yazdi referred to the issue of marja'iyat [source of emulation] and said: In the same way that the noble prophet—may God's peace and benediction be upon him and his kin—on the basis of the verses of the glorious Koran, in addition to elucidating divine injunctions also possessed the responsibility for guardianship of the Muslims. Later, these two important responsibilities were entrusted upon the immaculate Imams—peace be upon them. In the same way, during the period of Major Occultation, these two great responsibilities are placed on the shoulders of their rightful heirs, namely the fully qualified foqaha [jurisconsults].

Reviewing the views of His Eminence Imam Khomeyni—may he be admitted to God's paradise—about the qualities of the marja', especially in the present world and the enormous sensitivity of the issue, Ayatollah Yazdi said: In view of the establishment of the Islamic government, it is not possible to deal with the issue of marja'iyat without paying attention to the issue of the guardianship of the Muslims.

In his second sermon, referring to the issue of Afghanistan and the continuation of the power struggle in that country, the acting Friday imam of Tehran called for putting an end to the clashes among various rival factions which will only result in the further destruction of Afghanistan.

Criticizing the compromising attitude of some Arab countries towards the Zionist regime, the head of the Judiciary said: The legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is not something that can be compromised by ignoring it.

Ayatollah Yazdi also referred to the recent attacks of the Serbs against the defenseless people of Bosnia-Herzegovina, especially against Bihac, which has been declared as a safe haven by the United Nations, and described the intensification of these attacks as the result of the hypocritical attitude of America towards this important human issue, as well as the silence of the United Nations and its uniform approach towards the aggressor and the victim.

In the first sermon, the acting Friday imam of Tehran described the issue of family rights, especially the rights of women in the conditions specified in the marriage contract.

Paper Urges Lifting of Iraqi Embargo

NC1711134194 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 12 Nov 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Iraqi Recognition of Kuwait Should Ease Embargo Against Iraqi People"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Saddam's regime has decided to recognize Kuwait, hoping that there would be a reversal of the Western intransigent stand against the regime that invaded its small yet rich neighbor. The Ba'thist regime hopes to bring the embargo to an end. It has the backing of Russia and France in the Security Council. But it does not seem likely that the embargo will be lifted.

The fact that Iraq no longer claims Kuwait as one of its provinces is welcome. Perhaps this might end the long-standing dispute between the two Arab neighbors. But whether Iraq will receive any leniency after this recognition is open to debate.

It is the U.S. and the British policy to make Iraq suffer for the impertinence to attack one of the most loyal allies of the West. They will go on putting pressure on Saddam but they will not tighten the noose to the point that it will strangle him. Saddam has proved to be a proper bete Noire [previous two words in italics] in the region. As long as Saddam is around, the Arab governments can be visited by Western arms merchants for more sale of their weapons, for bankrolling the arms industries in the U.S. and Britain.

One must be really naive to think the during and after the Persian Gulf War of 1991, the U.S. was unable to topple the regime of Saddam Husayn. They even ignored the much sought after Kurdish and Shia rebellions in the North and South of Iraq—Remember George Bush's exhortation to these people to rise up against Saddam's tyranny—and did not offer any assistance to these victims of Saddam's oppression because they did not want any strong Kurdish or Shia governments in Iraq.

The recognition of Kuwait does not seem likely to lead to lifting of sanctions against Iraq because that might strengthen Saddam and the West's undeclared adage is "the only good Saddam is a weak Saddam".

Aside from Western machinations in creating the present situation in Iraq and between Iraq and Kuwait, one should hold the Ba'thist regime responsible for their repeated exercises in futility. They attacked the nascent Islamic Republic in 1980 and finally in their war against the multinational forces declared that they wanted to make peace with Iran.

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Now in a pathetic replay of how they bowed before Iran, the Ba'thist regime is saying that they have no claim on Kuwait. Thousands of dead Iraqis and Kuwaitis later, the Iraqi regime has now decided to recognize Kuwait. Billions of dollars of damages to the Kuwaiti infrastructure later, the Ba'thist regime has now made a timid retreat from its position that Kuwait was the territory of Iraq. One must welcome such a change and at the same time one has to realize that anything goes in Saddam's universe: treachery, compromise, promises, breaking of promises.

If the West prefers to keep Saddam, they shouldn't make the Iraqi people suffer. The embargo against Iraq should be at least partially lifted to allow food and medicine to enter Iraq. The Iraqi people, the mothers standing in medicine lines clutching their babies, should not suffer to compensate for the crimes of the modern day Nebuchadnezzar who has held even his own nation hostage.

Editorial on Israel's 'Smear Campaign'

NC1711132894 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 14 Nov 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Zionist Regime Looking for Scapegoat"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In a desperate attempt to draw a connection between the popular Palestinian opposition to the shaky peace deal made with the compromising Arab heads, the Zionist regime's premier, Yitzhaq Rabin, out of frustration with the killing of three Israeli soldiers, has attacked Iran and indirectly has put the blame for the lack of success of the peace plan on Iran.

Iran is undoubtedly against the so-called peace process, and it has its own reasons for opposing this phony peace deal.

But should Iran's name spring up whenever the Zionist regime comes under mortar attack? Should Iran's name be mentioned every time the Israeli forces are reminded of their ineptitude to maintain "law and order" in Palestine? Pavlov's dog salivated whenever the bell rang in the lab. Not unlike Pavlov's miserable creature, the Zionist regime is conditioned to name Iran any time there is any bombing within its borders or without.

Israelis named Iran as the country behind the bombing in Buenos Aires and London in the past months. But they could not provide any proof to support their claim. One can be sure that if the Zionists had any evidence, they would have presented it to the world bodies such as the UN.

The Zionist method of attacking their opponents is by now known to all except those uninitiated in the intricacies of the Zionist propaganda campaign. They are acting out of a conscious plan to create a smokescreen for their crackdown on any voice of dissent in the Occupied Land. The Zionists need the distraction to engage in their widescale arrests and interrogation of those who have no connection whatsoever with the armed struggle but have remained in staunch opposition to the so-called peace process.

If it is not a conscious plan, then it is paranoia that makes the Zionists make such rash statements. The situation has never been so explosive in Occupied Palestine, which makes the Zionists all the more paranoid. Any reasonable person would tell you that the Zionists, out of their paranoia, always have to put the blame on someone else for the explosive situation they have helped to create since 1948. The Biblical law (Lev 16:8) might allow the Jews to put the sins of the community on the head of a goat (azazeel/:scapegoat), but the Zionists cannot put any blame on Iran. Iran has only stated its sincere, honest opposition to the peace plan. In the tradition of Old Testament prophets who spoke the word of justice and truth, Iran is only speaking the truth.

Zionism is a travesty and a mockery of the Jewish faith. It is a Machiavellian version of the pure message of the prophets of Allah that were sent unto mankind to preach peace and brotherhood. The history of the Zionist regime, a regime from whose very inception has engaged in state terrorism against unarmed civilians, is a witness to the claim that Zionism is not an ideology that favors pacifism and peace.

The action of true Jews on Yom Kippur may be sanctioned by the Bible, but there is no authority whatsoever in the world that will sanction that Zionists' nagging smear campaign to scapegoat the Islamic Republic.

Just recently, one of the Zionist officials had criticized other countries for criticizing the actions of the Zionist regime. The Zionist official had said that other countries, instead of pointing the finger at other nations, should try to solve the problem of their own nation. The Zionist regime should act on the basis of the advice it has given to its critics: It should put its own house in order and should not turn to other nations to justify its lack of goodwill to solve the biggest problem it created in this century, namely the Occupation of Palestine.

Commentary Rejects Israel's 'Sinister' Efforts

LD1711213694 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 17 Nov 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In an interview with the Islamic Republic News Agency, IRNA, on Wednesday November 16th, the spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry, Mr. Mahmud Mohammadi, explained the goals of the Zionist regime in tarnishing the Islamic Republic of Iran's foreign relations.

Mr. Mohammadi emphasizing the fact that the sinister political and propaganda efforts of the Tel Aviv leaders against the Islamic Republic of Iran have been fruitless, described the Zionist regime as being ruthless and terrorist.

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The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman, during the interview, reminding the recent provocations of the Zionist regime in creating disruption in the Islamic Republic of Iran's ties with Austria, stipulated: What exists as ties amongst the legitimate governments and countries having identity, is based on the mutual needs of the governments, and this is despite the sinister designs of the Zionists.

The Iranian foreign ministry spokesman, Mr. Mohammadi's comments in response to the recent provocations of the Zionist regime have come at a time when some time ago in continuation of the Zionist regime's provocations against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the prime minister and the foreign minister of the regime had asked Austria to sever ties with Tehran. But, like in the past, this time too, their efforts were defeated and the negative response by the Austrian officials, once again, pushed the united front of the United States and Zionism into a defensive posture.

The Zionist regime leaders consider the Islamic Republic of Iran as an obstacle in the realization of their compromising goals in occupied Palestine within the frame of the so-called peace talks. But the Islamic Republic of Iran not only considers the provocations as something which could not be termed as peace, but which are solely designed to legitimize the presence of the Zionist regime in the occupied territories and impose it on the Palestinian Muslims in the future, and this is something which the Islamic Republic of Iran condemns.

Under these conditions, it is obvious that the Zionist leaders make use of every propaganda and political tool in trying to isolate the Islamic Republic. But the sinister efforts, the trend of which has been shaped in Europe, have so far brought about nothing but defeat for the Zionist regime and its supporters.

What is definite is the fact that Iran's ties with the European governments are based on the axis of legitimacy, identity and bilateral interests. And this is something which the Zionist regime and the United States have always failed to comprehend.

Bosnia-Herzegovina Arms Embargo Discussed

NC1711135994 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 13 Nov 94 p 2

[Editorial: "OIC's Contact Group Must Meet Immediately To Discuss Bosnia"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Notwithstanding objections from Britain, other European allies and Russia, the United States has decided to ease the enforcement of Bosnian arms embargo.

The U.S. warships patrolling the Adriatic Sea will no longer stop or delay ships that are suspected of transferring weapons to Bosnia.

The fallacious reasoning for the lifting of the arms embargo is that this will inevitably make the Serbs accept a diplomatic settlement ending the long war in the former Yugoslavia which, according to latest report by Bosnian Health Ministry, has so far claimed the lives of 144,000 Bosnians, 16,000 of whom were children.

But the lifting of the arms embargo may act as a double-edged sword. The Serbs too might get the much needed materiel from the very sources that have always provided them with political and moral support.

What is certain is that the war is going to escalate. It will be an all-out war from now on. The Serbs have prepared themselves for this war by giving their hawkish leader, Radovan Karadzic, the opportunity to wage war as he pleases. He will not have to convene with the Serbian Assembly in Pale to discuss his moves. He is even given the right to act as a dictator: to declare martial law, to punish the deserters and draft dodgers.

In this situation the traditional allies of the Serbs are definitely planning to take advantage of the easing of the embargo to make sure that Karadzic and his forces receive state-of-the-art armament.

What is the Muslim world doing in countering the possible reinforcement of the Serbian ranks? There is no doubt that Muslims should muster all their resources to fight the fascist Serbian ranks responsible for thousands of rapes of defenseless women on Bosnia and dislodging hundreds of thousands of Muslims in the heart of Europe and for doing with Muslims what Hitler did to the ethnic minorities he disliked.

The Muslim world should have foreseen a day like this and should have made plans to counter this new situation which may further endanger the survival of Muslim Bosnians into the 21st century. It is incumbent upon the Contact Group of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) [Islamic Conference Organization, ICO] to convene as soon as possible to formulate a plan of action to strengthen the Bosnian forces by their traditional and new allies makes it all the more urgent for Muslims to begin reinforcing the Bosnian army. The emergency meeting should come up with practical ways to provide the Bosnian government with the materiel that they have always been denied.

Tehran seems to be an ideal venue for this emergency meeting because, as Bosnians themselves have admitted that Iran, among all Muslim countries, has been the most vociferous champion of the rights of Bosnians and has always provided moral, humanitarian and political support to the forsaken people of Bosnia. OIC owes it to the Muslims in Bosnia to convene whenever it is necessary. The Muslim governments owe it to the Muslim Ummah to defend them with proactive measures. Convening in Tehran as soon as possible will mean that the OIC realizes the urgency of the situation.

Any convention after the reinforcement of the Serbian forces would be a reactive measures. It is high time

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Muslims took proactive measures, rather than reactive ones. That is what separates losers from winners.

Libya Offered Engineering Assistance

LD1711164594 Tehran IRNA in English 1436 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Nov. 17, IRNA—Iran's ambassador in Libya, Hojjat ol-Eslam Nuri-Shahrudi, in Tripoli Thursday [17 November] expressed Tehran's readiness to meet technical and engineering needs of Tripoli in road and transport, post and telegraph, as well as machine manufacturing industry.

He made the remark in a meeting with Libyan minister of post and communication, 'Izz-al-Din al-Hinshari. The Libyan official welcomed the idea and underlined promotion of Tehran-Tripoli ties in the fields of mutual interests.

AZERTAG News Agency To Open Bureau in Tehran

LD1711151194 Tehran IRNA in English 1423 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, Nov. 17, IRNA—The visiting managing director of the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) Fereydoun Verdinejad and head of Azerbaijan's AZERTAG news agency Shamel Mohammadov here Thursday [17 November] inked an agreement for mutual cooperation.

The two sides announced their agreement to expand mutual cooperation in areas of news echange and training after holding several rounds of talks.

Under the agreement IRNA would help the Azeri news agency open a bureau in Tehran and AZERTAG news agency in return would provide necessary facilties for Irna's bureau chief in Baku to expand its activities.

Verdinejad is to wind up his four-day visit to Baku and return home on Thursday. On Wednesday, IRNA and AZERTAG inked another agreement proposing the setting up of a pool of news agencies of Caspian Sea littoral states.

MKO Said Involved in Transiting Narcotics

LD1711125894 Tehran IRNA in English 1230 GMT 17 Nov 94

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kerman, Nov. 17, IRNA—A senior security official said here Thursday [17 November] that persons affiliated to the terrorist Mojahideen e-Khalq Organization (MKO) were involved in transiting narcotic drugs via Iran's eastern border and Kerman Province to Europe.

"An MKO member has been arrested in a clash between local security forces and members of an international gang who were trafficking narcotic drugs abroad," the director general at the provincial information department said.

According to the official, the arrested person was detained and held in custody for one year in the northern city of Gorgan in 1981. After his release, he crossed into Afghanistan where he contacted an MKO representative and received the necessary instructions on leading major drug trafficking gangs, before coming back to the country, the official said.

The official added that one of the major successes of his department was unveiling the involvement of MKO terrorists in transiting narcotics drugs in a bid to earn additional incomes. He noted that many members of the counterrevolutionary grouplets have returned to Iran and are now living and working freely after realizing the true nature of the grouplets.

Addressing other members of such grouplets, he said that they, too, could return to Iran to find out realities by calling at Iranian embassies abroad.

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